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Lowestoft	33/0	19/9	27/6	15/0	20/0	10/0
Yarmouth	34/0	20/0	27/6	15/0	20/0	10/6
Cromer	34/0	20/0	27/6	15/0	20/0	10/0
Norwich	31/10	18/11	—	—	—	—
LIVERPOOL ST. TO						
Walton-on-the-Naze, Clacton-on-Sea, Harwich	20/0	12/0	17/6	10/0	12/6	7/6
Felixstowe	23/4	14/3	17/6	10/0	12/6	7/6
Aldeburgh	27/9	16/9	25/0	13/0	15/0	9/6
Southwold	31/3	18/5	27/6	15/0	20/0	10/0

TOURIST TICKETS are issued daily from 1st May to the 31st of October, and are available for return any day up to and including the 31st of December of the year of issue.

FORTNIGHTLY TICKETS are issued daily, and are available for return any day within 15 days, including days of issue and return.

FRIDAY TO TUESDAY TICKETS are issued every Friday and Saturday, and are available for return on the day of issue, or on any day up to and including the following Tuesday.

TOURIST, FORTNIGHTLY, AND FRIDAY TO TUESDAY TICKETS to the above stations are also issued from Great Eastern Stations within 12 miles of London at the same fares as from Liverpool Street. Passengers are allowed to travel to and from Liverpool Street to join or leave the fast Seaside Trains; also to and from Stratford to join or leave the Trains booked to call at that Station. They are also issued from New Cross (L.B. & S.C.) and all Stations on the East London Railway; also from Stations on the Tottenham and Hampstead Line, Gospel Oak to South Tottenham inclusive, at the same fares as Liverpool Street.

The above Tickets are available to and from additional Stations as follows:—*Clacton-on-Sea Tickets* at Frinton, Walton, Harwich, Dovercourt; *Walton-on-the-Naze Tickets* at Frinton, Clacton, Harwich, Dovercourt; *Frinton-on-Sea Tickets* at Clacton, Walton, Harwich, Dovercourt; *Harwich Tickets* at Dovercourt, Parkeston, Frinton, Clacton, Walton; *Felixstowe Tickets* at Trimley; *Aldeburgh Tickets* at Leiston; *Southwold Tickets* at Darsham, Wenhaston, Blythburgh, Walberswick; *Hunstanton Tickets* at Heacham; *Lowestoft Tickets* at Beccles, Carlton, Colville, Oulton Broad, Reedham, Yarmouth, Cromer; *Yarmouth Tickets* at Beccles, Reedham, St. Olave's, Acle, Lowestoft, Cromer; *Cromer Tickets* at North Walsham, Gunton, Yarmouth, Lowestoft. Passengers must pay the ordinary single fares when travelling locally from one station to the other.

EXTRA JOURNEY RETURN TICKETS AT REDUCED FARES are issued at the above Stations to the Station from which the Tickets were issued, to holders of not less than two Tourist or Fortnightly Tickets.

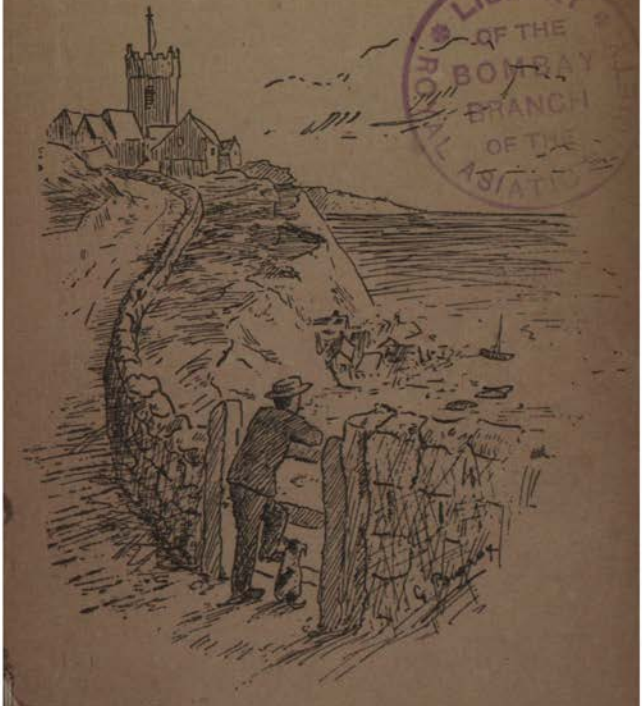
EXTENSION OF TICKETS.—Passengers holding Friday to Tuesday Tickets and wishing to stay for a fortnight or a shorter period, may do so by paying the difference between the Friday to Tuesday and Fortnightly Fares; and in the same manner Fortnightly Tickets may be extended to Tourist Tickets by paying the difference between those fares.

List of Farmhouse and County Lodgings in the Eastern Counties, and Pamphlets on the "Broads" District of Norfolk and Suffolk can be obtained (post free) on application to the Superintendent of the Line, Liverpool Street Station, London, E.C.

Liverpool St. Station, 1897. **WILLIAM BIRT**, *General Manager*

Sisters by the Sea

Clement Scott



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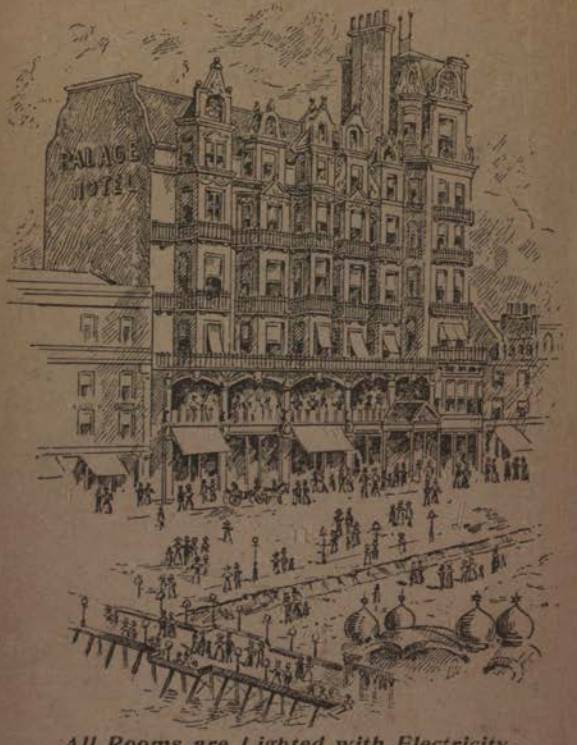

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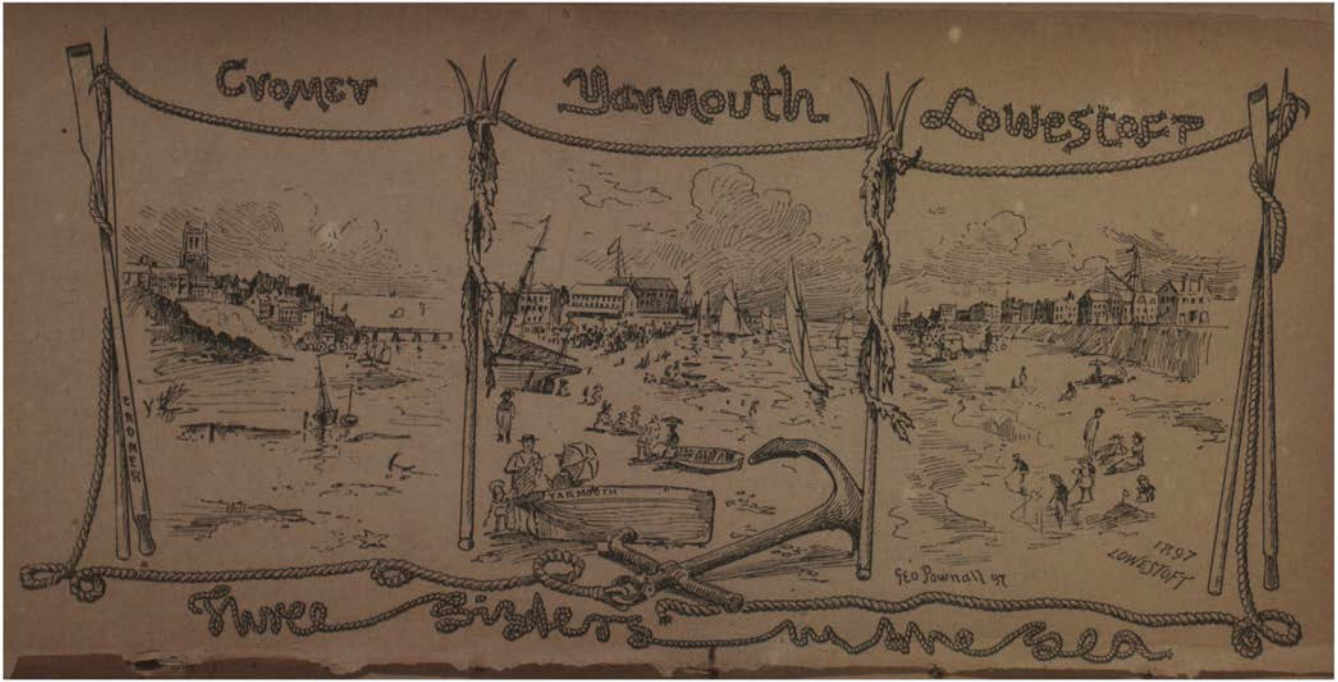
Cromer
Yarmouth
Lowestoft
YARMOUTH
1897
LOWESTOFT
Three Birds

SISTERS BY THE SEA

Seaside and Country Sketches

98686

BY

CLEMENT SCOTT

Author of "The Wheel of Life," "Blossomland," "Pictures of the World," "Poppyland Papers," etc., etc.

LONDON
LAWRENCE GREENING & CO.,
20 Cecil Court, Charing Cross Road, W.C.
and
THE "FREE PRESS" COMPANY,
429 Brixton Rd., S.W.
1897

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TO MY GOOD FRIEND,

SIR WILLIAM BIRT,

WHO HAS GIVEN ME

THE KEY

TO OPEN THE GATES OF MANY

A SUMMER PARADISE

WHERE DWELL

SUCH SISTERS OF THE SEA

AS

LAZY-LAND, DREAM-LAND, AND POPPY-LAND

August, 1897.

Ernest Hart

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26 GREAT JAMES STREET, W.C.,
AND 429 BRIXTON ROAD, S.W.

Midland and Great Northern Joint Railway.

The PICTURESQUE ROUTE to

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NORTH WALSHAM

For the NORFOLK BROADS, and

YARMOUTH.

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Issued from London (King's Cross), Leicester, Birmingham (Mid.), Nottingham, Derby, Wakefield, Bradford, Halifax, Leeds, York, &c.

THROUGH TRAINS are run during the season, from London (King's Cross), Birmingham (Mid.), Nottingham, &c., to Sheringham and Cromer.

For particulars as to train service, cheap tickets &c., apply to the Traffic Manager, Midland and Great Northern Joint Railway, King's Lynn, or to the Superintendents of the line, Midland Railway, Derby, and Great Northern Railway, King's Cross, London.

W. CUNNING,

July, 1897. *Traffic Manager.*

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CROMER.

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Stands in its own grounds of Seven Acres. Adjoining the celebrated Links of the Royal Cromer Golf Club.

SPECIAL TERMS FOR GOLFERS.

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CLEMENT SCOTT says in his "Poppyland Revisited," "The best situated Hotel in all East Anglia, indeed it would be difficult to beat it for situation anywhere; a castle of indolence on the topmost height of a sea-kissed down."

Good Service of Trains throughout the Year, and Cheap Trains from Friday till Tuesday at the following rates:—20s., first-class return; 10s., third-class return; and 15-day tickets at slightly reduced Rate.

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Three Sisters by the Sea.

WHENEVER I take a trip to East Anglia—delightful, hospitable East Anglia—with its bold health-giving sea breezes, its smiling cornfields, its picturesque ruined churches and gardens of sleep, its acres of scarlet poppies, its cliffs, and downs, and world of dreamy meandering broads, I am met with a cordial handshake by three charming sisters by the sea!

Seldom have I encountered three summer friends with such marked individualities and temperaments. The one is bold, frank, outspoken, full of fun, and apt at times to be noisy. She detests conventionality, and they call her "Yarmouth." The second sister is very neat, always well dressed, very pretty, not all a prude, for at odd times she is inclined to imitate the unconventionality of her sister Yarmouth, and to dance wildly on the yellow sands; but, as a rule, she is a modest, discreet, church-going, and Sunday-school-loving sort of a girl. She is known as "Lowestoft."

The third sister is the artist of the family. She is a lovely child, with glorious masses of red hair. She affects high art gowns, apple-green serges, and smocked tunics. She talks well and is very intense. Her companions are Girton and Newnham girls. She cultivates the society of learned clergymen and professors. She has been known to argue with the head master of a public school. She is found in corners of the cliff, among the bracken and the fern and the "red, red poppies," writing poetry for high-class magazines. She is earnest in everything she does; very broad-minded and liberal, never disdaining the society of actors, artists, and musicians—even politicians, on both sides of the House. She points out to you with pride the stately manor house on the hill, where, in a secluded arbour, a famous actor studied Hamlet under the inspiration of the Established Church, and played it like a monotonous curate. She points out with pride the glorious sea-kissed turf which has been trodden again and again by a most popular comedian of Scottish extraction, I think they call him "Alexander the Great," when engaged in many a "foursome" at

golf. This art-loving, red-haired, intense descendant of Præ-Raffaelitism and Postlethwaite, they call "Cromer." Each sister has her champions, her admirers, and her staunch friends, and each one holds a light-hearted levee in the heart of the holiday season.

I suppose that I, and most of us who lived in the days of the dear green numbers of "Boz," first fell in love with Yarmouth when under the influence of Charles Dickens. Here was the little house made out of a boat on Gorleston Beach; here was the happy holiday home of little David Copperfield, taken to "The Ark" by his faithful old Peggotty; here lived the rough, sea-tanned old Peggotty, and Ham, the bold but bashful sea lion, and maundering old Mrs. Gummidge, and here was enacted that human romance in which the handsome Steerforth, and the gentle little Emily, and the black-haired, defiant, passionate Rose Dartle, were concerned. It was this sea-port that made us friends, if not in person, at least in imagination, with the flat sands and low-lying country about Yarmouth, with its traditions and its "ancient fish-like smell." Once in bloater-land we hear something of the famous "rows"

of Yarmouth, of its splendid churches, of its grand old market-place, where sometimes you can pick up a bargain in old china, if you are clever, but its glory will ever consist in its unequalled sands, which would give the whole of the Isle of Thanet, with Ostend, Dieppe, and Boulogne thrown in, a good start and a beating at the finish. But remember one thing. These places, though ever young, are ever old. Search the whole district of Yarmouth, penetrate into the upper part of Lowestoft, study your Cromer with the valuable county history, and you will see how they are one and all connected with Scandinavia, to which Northern land their seamen of old set sail, and meeting these bold warriors of the sea they exchanged their goods and their merchandise.

They must have exchanged something more precious also—their hearts—for you cannot enter a village on the whole coast of East Anglia without noticing some tall, strapping, blue-eyed, fair-bearded young sailor whose ancestors, I'll stake my life on it, were Danes.

Blood is thicker than water, and you can detect the "hardy Norseman" yet in face and form and language, and in

that gentle simplicity and manly tenderness which are the characteristics of the East-Anglian fisherman and peasant. In simple courtesy they are brothers also. No one ever walked along a Norfolk lane, no one ever started to bathe at cock-crow, or returned in the delicious twilight from a long walk past the cottages and gardens starred with evening primroses, the air all perfumed with roses and sweet briar, without receiving the cheery greeting, "Good-night, Sir," or "Good-morning," from a descendant of a Norseman.

But Yarmouth has vastly altered since the days of the Peggottys and Charles Dickens. There are no more house-boats — literally house-boats — boats turned topsy-turvy and changed into a house, on the Gorleston beach. Gorleston has become a handsome and fashionable suburb to Yarmouth, and the splendid roadway between the houses on the beach and the yellow sands is a racing ground for "bikes" of every sort and description. Yarmouth, in fact, is a jolly place, and is not ashamed of its jollity. There is no nonsense about Yarmouth. Like its cousins, Blackpool and Morecambe

up North, it does not disdain white shirt sleeves, foaming pots of ale, and long churchwarden pipes. Nor is any visitor to any one of them ashamed to sit on the doorstep and address the neighbours over the way. Whilst the men affect shirt-sleeves, the women are devoted to bulging blouses and multi-coloured yachting caps. Margate and Yarmouth are, in many convivial respects, half-sisters. They have a common love for the music-hall and the melodies thereof. In this respect Yarmouth is a perfect glutton.

Not content with a handsome theatre and various variety shows, Yarmouth boasts an open-air music-hall on the sands, and no less than three piers, where they dance and sing, and literally cut capers from morning until night. I suppose that more shellfish is consumed in Yarmouth than at any other place in the world. The visitors seem to be standing at trucks and barrows on the sea-front from breakfast-time until supper, tossing down huge oysters, mussels, and giant whelks, to still more fortify the system already amply invigorated with ozone.

And even when the stars are out the passion for this fine sea-fruit is not

assuaged, for the lamps on the oyster-stalls, the lamps on the bikes, and the lamps provided by the Yarmouth Urban Council, make of themselves a pretty impromptu illumination.

But, after all, the sands are the glory of Yarmouth. The seaport has its antiquities, its traditions, its history ; it is the chief victualling place for the yachts and wherries that are lost among the leafy solitudes of the Broads ; it is justly proud of its bloaters—but the sands of Yarmouth present a spectacle unique indeed. I could sit all day watching with intense interest the farces, burlesques, pantomimes, nay, even the domestic and other dramas, enacted on the Yarmouth sands. Here the delighted and independent visitors not only revel in the sands, but literally bury themselves in them. You descry the heads of maidens and youths popping up above the sand, but their bodies are buried therein.

They are all children at Yarmouth, and give themselves up to free and unadulterated enjoyment. Here the photographers and "buskers" flourish, and we have the latest wonders of science.

Here electrophones, animatographes,

cinematographes, and biographs, may all be seen on the yellow sands at prices ridiculously cheap.

Whatever belongs by right to the music-hall and the variety theatre is naturally dear to the traditions of the Yarmouth sands. Long may they flourish! These happy people work hard, their holiday is very brief, and if this sand-burying, this oyster-consuming, this band-playing, this horn-blowing, this hilarious shouting, and these choice reminiscences of Gus Elen, R. G. Knowles, Chirgwin, Vesta Tilley, and Marie Lloyd give them pleasure, who dare say them nay?

Lowestoft borrows but very slightly from her sister Yarmouth. She is, as I said before, very careful, discreet, and select. She hastens slowly. Recently she has adopted the Yarmouth plan of a concert on the sands, but it is a concert more moderate in style. At Lowestoft they do not roll about upon the sands, or bury in them, but sit out in comfortable deck chairs, watching the waves, and pitching stones into the sea.

In many respects Lowestoft prides itself upon being old-fashioned and conservative. At one of the oldest hotels, an excellent one close by the

Harbour Gates, there is still a man's coffee-room in which a petticoat may not be seen, the ladies being relegated to a conversation house of their own. The sexes are divided as they are at Anglican churches. As the Yarmouth influence has grown upon Lowestoft, so it has been thought well to divide the Lowestoft summer society. Such as love honest fun keep to the lower, or pier end, of the beach; such as come to Lowestoft for quiet and rest, go up cliff, where, at the delightful Grand Hotel up cliff, away from the crowds and the trippers, in a splendid hotel garden surrounded by trees, conservatories, and flowers, it is impossible to hear the twang of the cockney concertina or the refrain of a popular music-hall ditty. I don't say that Lowestoft has cliques, after the fashion of Jersey and Guernsey. She does not encourage "sets" that snub and turn up their noses at one another, but it is found a convenient plan to separate music from rest, and so far the plan has worked admirably. But, after all, this separation is purely local and temporary, for Lowestoft boasts such a splendid and well-conducted pier, in which public rooms for wet weather, a club-house, and

numerous advantages are numbered; and here the music is so admirable that, when the shades of evening fall fast, both upper Lowestoft and lower Lowestoft join hands and mix together in a friendly fashion until bedtime.

But it would take a chapter to enumerate the advantages of Lowestoft, whose best friends seem never to desert it. It has public gardens of every kind, many opportunities for cricket, tennis, and golf, and a surrounding country of great beauty, from which you can get many a peep at the Broads —that restful waterway, combining the advantages of sea, lake, and river, where life, away from letters, business cares and noisy telegrams, seems one long, delightful doze, and a rare opportunity for dreamful rest. Lowestoft has also the conspicuous advantage of a fine harbour, and when Sunday comes round the yachts put in for the enjoyment of a quiet day, anchored and at peace.

But, familiar as these beautiful sisters, "The Three Graces," are to me, the most marked change has been found in Cromer, or Poppy-land, as it is now universally called. Scarcely fourteen years ago, a simple and primitive little

hamlet, with a lighthouse, and a fine sea-down, an East Anglian church hemmed in by the few diminutive shops that Cromer then boasted, a ricketty pier, on which nobody walked, very scant accommodation for travellers, little known to the great world of London, and only locally patronised as a bathing place, Cromer has, in the course of seaside evolution, become one of the most fashionable health resorts on the East Coast of England.

The marvellous air, added to splendid enterprise, have combined to make Cromer what it has become, to the surprise of its very oldest friends. When I first saw Cromer, and walked out of the little town, over the lighthouse hill at the edge of the cliff towards the deserted "garden of sleep" at Sidestrand, I could easily have counted the farmhouses and cottages I passed on both hands. Overstrand, with its picturesque ruined church, was less than an ordinary village; Sidestrand was even smaller than that. A prettier, more restful, or secluded spot could not have been found around the whole coast of England. At that time a very few farmers or cottagers ever dreamed of taking in holiday guests.

They jogged along peaceably and had no idea of the little gold mine waiting to be discovered. Behold Cromer now! Here we find new hotels springing up in every direction, the latest and most imposing having recently been built close by the links, the now famous Royal Links Hotel, on the splendid hill-top where the old lighthouse still stands, with its acres and acres of red houses dotted over valley and hill, with its holiday hamlet at Overstrand, now almost as large as Cromer was when I first knew it, and with the spirit of advance stirring all over Poppy-land right as far as Mundsley on the "Garden of Sleep" side, and further than Runton or Sheringham on the other.

This enterprise, much discussed and often deplored, has been argued *pro* and *con* by the sentimentalists and the downright practical people. On the one side it has been urged that Cromer has been spoiled; on the other it is stoutly maintained that the lovely, healthy, glowing spot has been opened up to thousands of toilers, who, for a few short weeks at the best, can drink in strength, new life, and fresh courage at every breath; for Cromer, believe

me, does not depend for its success alone on its fine sea-down, its hotel life, its farmhouse, its cottage life, and all the minor attractions of humdrum seaside existence. Elsewhere they can golf, elsewhere they can lie on a flower-covered cliff, eternally looking out to sea, or pretending to read a book, with the larks singing half-way to Heaven, and the "murmur of innumerable bees" in the clover and the beanfields near by. But the true lovers of nature know by this time that Cromer stands in the very heart of a most enchanting country, and that Cromer is the starting point for excursions to "fresh woods and pastures new"; that its Roman encampments, and cool, green lanes, and historic houses, and peaceful villages, and noble flint churches are probably unequalled in any other seaside district in England. In these "fast" days, when the bicyclist can cover such long distances in a day, even if Cromer be overcrowded, the athlete and the artist can soon get away from the Cromer that is, to some other dreamful corner of old England, far from railways and excursionists, where primitive English life remains pretty much what it was hundreds of years

ago. We envy the cyclist who has never yet made the acquaintance of the great high road between Cromer and Norwich, which was once awakened out of its long rest by the coach-horn of "Mad Wyndham," but soon went to sleep again only to be disturbed by the tinkle of the bicycle bell. I very much doubt if the landlords and employers of labour, or even the simple inhabitants of Cromer itself, regret very much that this lovely district—once reserved for the chosen few—has been freely given as a holiday playground and peaceful pleasure-house to the many. For here, as has been proved, the peculiar quality of the air acts as a powerful and certain tonic to the overworked and harassed brain. Toilers of all kinds find their own particular rest elsewhere; but the intellectual toiler — the author, the artist, the professional man, the schoolmaster, and the student — find their way here, dejected, unstrung, and depressed, and leave the enchanted district like "giants refreshed with wine," but it is the wine of the sea, the wine of the corn-land, the wine of the wood.

As one of the warmest admirers of

Cromer, I cannot believe that this corner of England, which to me of all the corners of the earth smiles most, will ever be spoiled so as to be disfigured and vulgarised. The new houses will grow old, the bungalows will be toned down to the landscape, the downs and the hills will be planted out into gardens, and already much that was barren is tree-sheltered, smiling, garden ground. Never, as I believe, will mere noise and racket come within the peaceful confines of Cromer-by-the-sea. It is not the Cromer that was, and unless the doctrine of mere selfishness is to be maintained, it never will be the same deserted Cromer again. But its peace has been protected, and its poppies flourish and are peerless still. The sleep evolved from the myriad poppies is in all the air.

The "Garden of Sleep," with its forsaken churchyard, and its ruined tower, still stands the sentinel of sleep over land and over sea.

Here they come, these happy holiday makers, in the brilliant August sunshine, to rest on the flowered banks of God's Acre, their footsteps seeming to sing as they go across the cornfields,

"Lightly tread, 'tis hallowed ground." Here they come, when the stars shine out over the ruined tower, and as the distant lighthouse flashes out to sea, and the Cromer lights are extinguished one by one, and the everlasting waves beat upon the sand and cliff, there seems to steal a murmur over all this lonely and still lovely land, and its eternal refrain is and will ever be, "Sleep, my Poppy-land, sleep."

Our Village.

IT is a glorious hot day in rose-covered July, so I should like to describe "Our Village"—a lovely bit of beautiful old England, in the very heart of what is justly called the "Garden of Suffolk," a picture daily before my delighted eyes, an old world hamlet that must have remained pretty much the same for a century, and perhaps longer still. But nature has claimed as her own this garden village of ours, surrounded as it is on all sides by parks and pleasaunces, and country houses, and tall ancestral trees, and peaceful grazing cattle.

Picture to yourself, then, an English village literally tucked into the folds of a park, covered with rose-embowered cottages, and beds of sweet lavender, and old red Georgian dwelling-houses, and the prettiest of churches with a pointed spire, and a "God's Acre" bordering the village street and the wayside road to London. Cottages, and villagers' gardens, and rambling red houses cluster around us. But I

am inclined to think that the most pleasant feature of our village is its romantic old world inn, a long, white, low, dormer-windowed, picturesque building, with thick white window frames, and a blue sign swinging over the hospitable door, which is the envy of antiquarian visitors—a real old-fashioned coaching inn, very much in repute fifty years ago, for did not the London coach stop here, was it not watered—and brandy and watered too—on its way to Great Yarmouth? For this is the famous "Three Tuns at Yoxford." An inn with stables that could accommodate a squadron of cavalry, and an inn that to this day never lacks customers or callers, first from its attractive situation, and secondly from the air of friendliness and comfort that prevails about the place, owing to the generous courtesy of a host and the graceful charm of a hostess of the old school. But I have not mentioned the chief beauty of our village inn, which has blossomed into the fashionable title of "Hotel," and I am sorry for it. The word "inn" is good enough for me.

I can see a genuine Corisande garden on the other side of the street facing the door of the inn, a garden gay this

lovely summer with tall, ivory-white Madonna lilies, and branches of blue Canterbury bells, and bushes of magenta phlox, and avenues of roses, and beds of dear old-fashioned sweet Williams and picotees, and such an undergrowth of mignonette carpeting the old apple and pear trees, that the combined odours perfume the scented village street. But I have kept the best thing until the last.

Our celebrated Suffolk inn is most renowned for the possession of one of the prettiest "bowling greens" in this peaceful county. You know the sort of "bowling green" that I mean. A splendid bit of faultless turf without a daisy or a dandelion upon it. The kind of pitch that is looked on with positive envy by cricketers and lawn tennis players, who would like to bring round their nets and bats, and stumps and rackets, and use it as an unrivalled practice ground. But the desecration would not suit the peace-loving and contented minds of our village bowling club, who come up every evening when the day's work is done, and smoke their pipes, and drink honest ale out of old tankards, and join in the monkish pastime on the green, or, sitting in the

evening twilight in the cosy little arbours and boscages that surround the bowling ground, discuss politics and matters of local interest in a cordial and friendly fashion.

I must own that I have a great affection for an English inn garden where the landlord permits, on a well-kept turf, either bowls or quoits, and, failing these more aristocratic pastimes, I should not be indifferent in a back-yard to an honest game of skittles. I could be "lured on" to skittles, as Mr. Middlewick hath it, very easily. These old English sports bring the village folk together; they encourage good feeling, amiability, and amicable discussions; and, in fact, the Yoxford bowling green is to all intents and purposes a village club in the open air, and I have known this same club to prolong its meetings so late that the farewell games have been played out, with the aid of stable lanterns, long after the sun had set and the moon and stars were shining over the pointed spire of old Yoxford Church.

But I very much question if even the members of the Yoxford Bowling Club know to what uses the cosy arbours

round their cherished green are put to in the delicious morning hours, when Yoxford is at work in the village shops or the sunny fields—that exquisite time of peace, when rest comes to the tired and overworked who are recruiting in our village; that silent time between ten and one, when the country is undisturbed, save by the rattle of a passing dogcart or the arrival of an excursion party on its way to Dunwich or Aldeburgh, or the whistle of an indolent village boy with the popular tune invariably wrong, or the deep lowing of the cattle in the adjacent park. At these hours of luxurious rest, with no sound but the buzzing of the bees in the roadside garden, or the swish and "come over" of the ostler in the stable-yard, merrily singing over his work, I have known one arbour to be occupied by a pretty governess, teaching three little tots of fair-haired children the first principles of English grammar, the rudiments of reading, the surely unnecessary task of scribbling on a scratchy slate, with occasional interludes of natural history, caused by chasing painted butterflies and dodging the attacks of hungry wasps.

Meanwhile, a second summer-house

has been secured by "my lady," who, in the early morning hours of a sunny summer day, deposits on the table, sacred at night to long churchwardens and tankards of ale, her inevitable piece of Russian embroidery, which distracts her thoughts from the cares of this life, and places before her the well-filled blotting-book of unanswered correspondence. She wants her rest also, and takes it in her own way. But it is no good, this courageous attempt to work when the sun shines on a brilliant July morning on the bowling-green. The rooks will caw in the old trees that shade the village spire, traps will drive up to the old inn door, and woman is nothing if she is not curious. The flowers insist on suggesting a nosegay, the currant and raspberry bushes are all alluring when the hot sun is on the delicious ripe fruit; and then arises the artfully sly temptation, "Come, put down your work, do! Shall I order the cart, and where shall we go to-day?" To lovely Framlingham, with its ruined castle, to romantic Blytheburgh, with its noble but neglected church, a welcome awaiting both of us at the cosy little inns attached to each romantic village or hamlet? Shall

it be over the moorland, with its heather blackened and killed by last winter's severe frost; to Southwold perched on a cliff, or to Aldeburgh and Dunwich, resting on a shingly beach, and consecrated to decorum and domesticity.

Do not for one moment imagine that we are wholly outside the pale of civilisation, or that we are so isolated and dull that we might die of the doldrums in a week. I fear that Mr. John Ruskin would not give us his blessing, or would postpone absolution at any rate, for, in spite of our noble old coaching inn, our bowling-green, our flint-towered church with the pointed spire, and our immediate vicinity to ruined monasteries and abbeys, some hidden in cornfields, and some utilised as farms, to say nothing of our propinquity to such noble examples of ecclesiastical architecture as Southwold, and Blytheburgh, and Covehithe, still we are—even in our deserted village—honestly in touch with the world. Scarcely a mile away, but up a hill and hidden by trees, if truth be told, there is a railway station, where you can be whisked up to London in a very few hours, thanks to the popular Great Eastern system, perfected for holiday makers.

But don't be alarmed! Never since I have been resident in our village have I heard the whistle of an engine the rattle of the shunter, or the scream of a passing train. Somehow or other the swaying trees in the parks ward off these uncomfortable sounds. It must be confessed also, that at our village will be found a miniature little post office, with the most courteous and attentive of postmasters and post-mistresses, and, whisper it not, a telegraph office also, which makes us within sixpence of London and the world. But, bless your heart, it does not matter to our village, for the telegraph posts go round the corner to Saxmundham, and I cannot see the ghost of a creosoted pole from the windows of the dreamy village inn, or from the arbour retreat on the dear old bowling-green and its adjacent garden.

One confession more, and I shall have made a clean breast of it. The London morning daily paper is placed on the breakfast table at nine o'clock, so we sometimes hear what is going on in the Great City, and can discuss men, women, and matters political and social, on the green at night.

I remember well that I was a guest

at the old "Three Tuns" when our village had just recovered — but only just—from two spells of unusual excitement. The first was the General Election, and the second was Bank Holiday, an institution very dear to the residents of our village, be they men, women, or children. The men on these occasions. foregather in wagonettes and brakes, and seem to make friendly calls at all the hostelries within a range of twenty miles from their accustomed homes. The women, when they do not accompany the men, make use of the holiday for some solid practical purpose, and hold their gatherings of "Women's Friendly Societies," varied with tea, cakes, and hunt the slipper, under the oaks of some gentleman's park. As for the children, they raid the village "general" shops of all the available spades and pails, and rush with one accord to the sea, where they plunge and paddle from morning until night; passing through our village, radiant and shouting in the dawn of the holiday, and at evening time, with fair, curly heads resting on kind, trusting shoulders, "the dustman" having visited their closed and sleep-curtained eyes. But the election was quite another matter.

Then we burst out with rival factions of yellow and blue. All the marigolds in the cottagers' gardens, all the buttercups in the meadows, were impounded to adorn the Radical carriages, while cornflowers were at a premium to advocate the Unionist cause. It became as dangerous to take your walks abroad without a badge of some sort as it used to be at school not to show oak on "King Charles's Day."

We have a favourite spot in our village, known as "Conversation Corner." It is exactly where the coaching sign stands in the churchyard, pointing one way to London, one way to Yarmouth, one to Framlingham, and at the sharp bend of the road where in times gone by the "Rocket," or the "Comet," or the "Meteor," laden with passengers, drew up in fine style at the door of the "Old Tuns," and all became a bustle of ostlers, and buckets of water, and bran mashes, and hurried tankards of ale or "bottoms of brandy" for the coachman, the guard, and the travellers. We have pretty much the same kind of excitement now, when excursion parties, or driving tours, or swarms of cyclists sweep by or make a call; but at election time there was a great gathering against the churchyard

wall, by "Conversation Corner," in our deserted and peaceful village.

The Eye Division of Suffolk is still determinedly yellow—bright yellow—to the backbone, and it required all the eloquence and assurance of the orators in blue to appease the rustic voices when meetings of vast political importance were held in a large room in the stable yard of our village inn. But strife and anger never disturbed the serenity or charm of the "Old Tuns," or the tobacco parliament on the bowling green

Our excellent host is Mr. D. J. Beatton, a pluralist landlord, for does he not own, in addition to the "Tuns," the old "Bell Inn" at Saxmundham, and has recently added to his responsibilities the "White Lion Hotel" at Aldeburgh-on-Sea, one of the most charming hotels in the county, with a model landlady in gentle and kind-hearted Mrs. Beatton, beloved by everybody who knows her. Our good host Beatton is an athlete himself and the father of two very celebrated youngster athletes, well-known on the most famous running paths of England, determined very sensibly to be Unionist for private political purposes, but neutral as a host. At both his inns, the one

devoted to commerce and market days as Saxmundham, the other to rusticity and bowls at the garden village of Yoxford, and between which he and his good wife rattle backwards and forwards in a smart trap every day of the working year, he entertained blues and yellows with commendable impartiality. First to our village drove up the Radical candidate; the next night the Unionist party occupied the same rooms. Sometimes they and their lady canvassers met and foregathered on the bowling green. But great was the chaff when our popular host, who had kept his Unionist principles so carefully to himself, found to his chagrin that his apparent neutrality had had a very practical result. On the election morning, with a beautiful new blue tie, and azure rosettes adorning the headgear of his fast-trotting mare, he dashed off to record his vote at Saxmundham.

"Sorry to say we don't know your name here," answered the official at the polling-booth, with a sly wink, thinking it a joke to turn back one of the best known men in the county. "Dear me! dear me!" muttered our excellent host. "It is a great nuisance on such

a busy day, but there is no help for it, I must drive off to Yoxford, for I will not sacrifice my vote for anything. The county must be saved!" Up came the same answer, "Sorry to say we do not know you here," followed by the same suspicious chuckle. The truth came out that this ardent politician and treble innkeeper, who had been immersed in politics at two of his inns for six weeks, was not on the register. The subject is as dangerous a one just now in the Saxmundham commercial room by day as on the Yoxford bowling green a night.

I have suggested that the cool arbours of the Yoxford bowling green are, during the sunny morning hours, devoted to varied and strange pastimes—education, embroidery, novel reading, and, I am sorry to say, to the composition of stage plays. With the bees buzzing about your ears, and the wasps ready to sting the heart out of a favourite love scene, and the air perfumed with flowers, and the rooks cawing in the elms in the neighbouring park—here in the silence of the old inn arbours, heroines have to confess the despair of their miserable lives, heroes have to punish the destroyers of their domestic peace, and

splendid deeds on lifeboats have to be described in pulsing verse. It is then that the same genial temptress at one's side, my faithful lady, with dear little "Nipper" at her heels, suggests a little local colour.

How easy to change the scene from ruined churches, tumble-down priories, and deserted abbeys! The salt of the sea is within an hour's journey of our peaceful village. Once up the hill at Darsham, we can be whizzed away in less than no time to the middle-class respectability of Lowestoft, and to the downright fun, frolic, and humour of unequalled Yarmouth music-halldom by the sea. I acknowledge the fact. I love Yarmouth for a brief look in, and no more. I enjoy the twopenny concerts on the sands, where real comedy, farce, and cleverness, are united to catchy airs. I love to see Belinda half buried in the sand, pouring the gritty substance down the back of the collar of her adorer as he sleeps a sodden slumber in her faithful lap. I wonder where all the giant oysters come from that are swallowed by the dozen in the holiday months on the Yarmouth beach? And what a beach it is! How broad, how expansive, how irresistible to the

holiday maker! And then the caps and the cummerbunds, and the neck-ties, and the bicycles, and the brakes of holiday Yarmouth! There is no other such place in the world, except Blackpool in the north, and these two places are well worth seeing. But to go to Yarmouth on a market day (and you may possibly pick up a bargain in books or old china), and you will wonder if you are really in England, or it Belgium, or Holland, over the way And the joy is, that you can get back to restfulness and peace.

No stuffy lodgings, no cries of discontented, over-tired children. The trap with the fast pony is waiting us at Darsham Station. The sweet smell of the country once more soothes the brain Dear little "Nipper," dead tired, is fast asleep on her master's lap. Away goes the pony with "my lady" "handling the ribbons." The old inn is lighted up, and the good-hearted girls are assembled at the door to give us a welcome home. By the time that supper is over there is not a sound in our deserted village. One more pipe at the window overlooking that silent garden, where the evening primrose asserts itself in the moonlight. The

clock strikes eleven from the old church-tower. Bats flit about the spectral graves in the village churchyard that will be bathed in sunshine in the morning. Another day out of a brief holiday gone? It is time to turn in. Good-night, silent, sleepy little village in the garden land of Suffolk.

Nelson's Land.

PLEASANTLY idling in East Anglia I was anxious to see and inspect for myself the village home of Admiral Lord Nelson. There was this reason, among others, why I should visit Burnham Thorpe. The excellent rector is earnestly asking for funds to restore the old village church where Nelson's father ministered, and the gallant son sat in the mouldy, worm-eaten pews that exist to this very day, and maybe some charitable folk would like to hear what kind of a place it is, and how the modern world wags in the Norfolk village whence Nelson went as a middy, to be followed by frequent incursions of the press-gang, who firmly believed that the English village that had reared one Nelson would contribute scores of able sailors for the "King's Navee."

But, first of all, where was Burnham Thorpe? My Suffolk friends candidly owned their complete ignorance of the spot I was bound to visit. I consulted

the local post-mistress, and she shook her curls, pleading that it was quite enough to deal with the Suffolk letters without troubling herself with the business of Norfolk. Mark you, there is a little outstanding jealousy between the rival counties of East Anglia which time has never healed. I made the mistake of alluding to Lowestoft the other day as a Norfolk watering-place and got into dreadful disgrace thereby, for Suffolk is justly proud of this pretty spot, whose only fault is that by an excellent railway service it attracts hundreds of excursionists every sunny Sunday, but refuses to supply the poor souls with adequate refreshment when they get there. On a recent Sunday afternoon, finding myself at Lowestoft Railway Station, and having successfully foraged for a glass of cold water in the porter's room, for a thirsty dog, I was seized upon by at least a dozen women and children parched with thirst, who had turned into the railway station to while away the time until the train took them from Lowestoft the inhospitable to Norwich the bounteous. This, of course, is a big question that cannot be discussed here. I merely state that every Sunday

the trains pour visitors into Lowestoft —trains full of people that have been to church and attended to their religious duties, trains teeming with toilers who desire to enjoy the sea and to worship God in the fields; but these toilers and enjoyers of "rest," who do not want beer, or spirits, or intoxicants of any kind, could not, apparently, within prohibited hours, obtain so much as a cup of cold water, and fought for a glass of "Adam's ale" that I was carrying to a thirsty dog.

It appears that there are no less than seven Burnhams in the county of Norfolk. There are Deepdale, Norton, Overy, Thorpe, Sutton, Ulph, and Westgate all lying in a cluster; but the puzzle was to find one of them. A postal card sent to direct my pilgrim's steps said that Burnham Thorpe was affiliated to King's Lynn; but the map, on the other hand, showed me that King's Lynn was at least 30 good miles from Nelson's birthplace. So I took counsel of an intelligent station-master at Saxmundham, and he recommended me a truly roundabout journey by Great Yarmouth and Norwich, and so direct North to "Wells," near the sandy dunes of the more desolate

Norfolk coast. To visit Great Yarmouth on the occasion of such a pilgrimage was undoubtedly the correct thing. But this time it was not to perambulate the "Rows," so admirably described by Dickens, or to notice that the last vestige of Peggotty's ark has been destroyed and carted away from its resting-place at the corner of a Yarmouth street, or to sing comic songs or dance on one of the innumerable Yarmouth piers, or to burrow myself a reading nest on the glorious Yarmouth sands, or to drive a tricycle along the splendid sea road that beats the Bayswater Road for the bicycle, or to eat shrimps, or to embark for the Broads—but to face a dust-storm that can scarcely be equalled in Sahara in order to visit the Doric column, begun in 1817, and dedicated to the victories of Lord Nelson. All the Yarmouth visitors know the Nelson Column. Unlike our monument in Trafalgar Square, it bears on its summit a figure of Britannia with a trident in one hand and a wreath of laurel in the other. I am told that a splendid view of the town and sea can be obtained at the top. I do not doubt it.

They always say so. But I contented myself with making my observation from the bottom. On your way from Great Yarmouth to Norwich, provided your eyes are not too full of the Yarmouth sands, which have penetrated by this time into every crease and crevice of your clothing, you can get a very fair idea of the kind of scenery you will meet with whenever you take an excursion on the Norfolk Broads.

The prominent idea of the peaceful scene appears to be brown sails and windmills.

The sails of wherries and mills are apparently both motionless. You look out from the railway train, and see thousands of acres of flat land, innumerable canals, an occasional farmhouse, a welcome church spire or so, and at every turn, bend, corner, or distance in the landscape, a motionless windmill, and an equally motionless brown sail. How the corn is ever ground into flour on the Broads, or how the water is ever pumped from lake to dyke, or canal to sea, or how the yachts and wherries ever move more than an inch an hour, must ever be a mystery to the railway traveller. I have been into Norfolk and back again, I have

run up to Cromer or Yarmouth, or Lowestoft, as the case may be, but the same brown sails always appear to be in exactly the same spot where I left them. No doubt the occupants of the wherry are enjoying themselves, but they have not moved a quarter of a yard. I am told that it is delightful fun on the Broads, but that the progression is occasionally slow.

I am an eye-witness, and I am sure it is.

Who would not like to linger long in old Norwich, the glorious city of churches; one of the most picturesque spots in all England, one of the most foreign looking places in the beautiful East Anglia! It is market day, the very hour to see Norwich at its actual best.

You may not have time to visit the old Cathedral, or the Bishop's garden, or the mysterious Tombland, or the brasses in St. John's, Maddermarket; but you cannot fail to pass the flower and fruit market in the centre town—as gay and lively as Brussels or Antwerp. They are selling roses at a penny a bunch, and hothouse grapes at one shilling and threepence a pound; and the county families are driving in

for shopping, and the farmers' wives are doing their marketing; and on the Castle Hill, as in old Smithfield days, they are selling everything, from a cow to a cart whip, from a tub to a tarpaulin. Norwich, to the admirer of the picturesque, is certainly one of the most delightful cities in England; and I envy the visitor who has never seen its countless architectural treasures, or rowed one summer evening along the quiet cathedral stream that leads to the lawns of Thorpe and the quaint old riverside inns of Whitlingham. So, with just a peep at the new Catholic cathedral on the hill, which the munificent Duke of Norfolk is building on the side of an abandoned gaol, regretfully I leave romantic Norwich and continue my roundabout journey to the northern watering-places of Wells and Holkham, far too little known as holiday resorts. I was discussing the country of Norfolk recently with a very well-informed man, a sportsman and a student of nature, and somehow or other he had got it into his head that Norfolk was a flat and uninteresting country. The same utterly erroneous impression occurs in respect to the lovely country of Essex.

Well, there are Essex marshes, and there are Norfolk broads, but Essex and Norfolk are no more destitute of green hills than Westmoreland and Cumberland.

I should have liked anyone who laboured under the impression that Norfolk was flat and unpicturesque, to have been at my side during that lovely railway journey between Norwich and Wells. More typical English scenery does not exist anywhere. It is never the same in character. Now a splendid specimen of "Perpendicular," or "Early English," in the form of a church tower, or spire nestling among trees; now a collection of red-roofed cottages; now an ideal village with a windmill, that would have enchanted old Cromer; now a wood; now a stretch of pastorage; now a hillside with the ripened corn swaying to the breeze, until the train stops short at the village terminus of Wells-by-the-Sea. This is a seaside village as yet unspoiled. Visitors there are who do not mind a tramp to the beach from the primitive hamlet, but they do not require the attractions of niggers, or piers, or local bands. The

streets of Wells are as quiet and humble as those at Clovelly, and there is a charming little village inn with a fruit garden and an old bowling green facing an old-fashioned village green. The landlady, whose family has owned the hostelry for centuries, is in despair when she presents me with the visitors' book, for it appears she has recently been entertaining literary giants unawares. "Why didn't they tell me who they were?" says the excellent hostess, as she points to well-known names. "Though if they had," she added, pathetically, "I could not have treated them better than I did. It is plain fare, sir, at the Crown, but homely." And to all of this I can testify. Having lunched off a home-made rabbit-pie and Norfolk ale, I was prepared to endorse the eulogium of a London governess and her companion, who could not leave Wells and return to work again without contributing a *paean* in verse to the visitors' book, of course in praise of the inn, the cooking, the beds, the landlady, and the fair-haired Abigail. The old inn at Wells may be romantic, but it is not so old-fashioned as to boast

a posting establishment—a matter of necessity for one who wanted to get on to Burnham Thorpe. So I put myself in charge of the juvenile "boots" of the old world inn on the village green, and he in turn conducted me to the shop of a sporting saddler, very learned in horseflesh, who was the proud possessor of a fast trotting-mare, capable of doing any distance in any given time.

The prospect of a drive into the country on a lovely summer morning instead of presiding over whips and saddles appealed direct to the mind of the honest saddler, and in less than no time the mare was put into a smart gig, and we were bowling away in the direction of Lord Leicester's beautiful park at Holkham, which lies midway between Wells-by-the-Sea and Burnham Thorpe. Passing down cool avenues of ever-green oak, the pride of Holkham, scaring the horned Scotch cattle and browsing deer, that came up almost to the windows of the mansion owned by the descendants of the famous lawyer Coke, over green stretches of park-land, with the sea on one side and cultivated farm-land on the other, we discussed the

agricultural question, and the doughty deeds of Mr. Joseph Arch, for we are passing through the centre of his famous agitation. My Jehu is a staunch Unionist, and does not hold with labourers' strikes at harvest time and the Arch agitation; still he is liberal enough to own that this village of Burnham Thorpe that I am about to visit has been turned from a down-at-heel, thriftless, untidy, ragged hamlet, into a neat, orderly, and respectable village, mainly through the influence of Joseph Arch and his Nonconformist friends—all of them Radical to the backbone.

A sleepier village than Burnham Thorpe does not exist on the face of Old England. It was harvest-time when I visited it, and everyone was a-field. The cottages were empty, the lanes were desolate; there was no sound save for the distant click of the reaping machine or the "murmur of innumerable bees" in the cottage gardens. I find that the new rectory is nearly a mile away from the village church, and, as ill-luck will have it, the rector has gone for his holiday, his sons have set off to take part in a local cricket match, so I am left in charge of

the rector's handy man, who has performed the same office for his predecessors, and who knows about as much of Nelson's birthplace as any of the other villagers. I cannot in candour say that his knowledge of Nelson lore is very extensive or peculiar. He has heard his mother say, who died at the venerable age of ninety-three, that the famous Nelson, on returning home from one of his campaigns, patted the fair-haired village girl on the head, and said she was a comely lass indeed. The story is probable enough.

An old lady at the age of ninety-three likes to remember that she was once a comely lass of seventeen, and to be patted on the head and admired by the author of the Lady Hamilton love-letters is in itself no small event to be proud of. Then there were stories of the "press-gang," and its determined efforts to bag the boys of Nelson's village, and of one of the oldest shipmates of Lord Nelson, who had been wounded by his side, and is still remembered by the oldest ale-house frequenters of Burnham Thorpe. But where, I ask, is Nelson's birthplace? Alas, the old rectory house is levelled

with the ground, and nothing remains to mark it but a disused well. No stone, no monument, no record whatever exists to show where our English hero was born. Could such a thing be said of other heroes who were not English born? The ancestors of Nelson sleep in the old church; the pews are there in which he sat in the chancel; the lectern is—by permission of the Lords of the Admiralty—made of the wood of the old ship "Victory," and engraved with memorial words on the brass torn from the sides of the grand old vessel; but the actual memorials of Nelson are scanty enough in Burnham Thorpe. On this stile he may have sat, on this tree he may have seen the sea that he loved shining in the distance, miles away; but his native place knows him no more. Since, therefore, it is impossible now to restore the old rectory, his home, and impracticable apparently to mark the spot with a monumental cross of simplest form and pattern, the new rector has thought it well to invite assistance to restore the old church where he prayed before he went out in search of fame, and returned thanks to God when he came home victorious. Burnham

Thorpe Church is charmingly situated in the heart, as it were, of an old English farm. Surrounded by trees and barns and wheatfields, it is the very epitome of peace and restfulness. There is much to be done to the fine old Norfolk church to increase its beauty and enhance its usefulness. A destroyed aisle can be restored, the old pews can be exchanged for open seats, a place for the little organ can be discovered other than in the centre of the chancel; but no restoration must be allowed to destroy the magnificent old brass of the chancel steps or the form of the church that has withstood time and tempest.

Meanwhile Englishmen should know that there is no abiding memorial of Lord Nelson at his village birthplace, and they should remember that the hamlet he and his father loved is within sound of the sea, of which he was once the ruler, and on which he helped to make Old England what she is—The Mistress and the Queen.

Margate, Ahoy!

THE lumbering old "Margate hoy" has been exchanged for the latest pattern electric-lighted, extra-salooned excursion steamer. Steam has superseded sail between Adelaide Wharf, London Bridge, and Merry Margate. The "Little Western" of our childhood's days has been broken up long ago for chunks of firewood. The well-remembered Margate Jetty has become the popular and fashionable "Extension." Sedan chairs are no more seen in front of the old-world, bow-windowed English houses in and around Cecil Square. The "dandy-horse" careering along the sea-front has become the bicycle. No longer do they, in hoops and farthingales, tread a measure of minuet or gavotte in the Assembly Room, but they jig it and foot it and romp hilariously to the tune of the latest music-hall melody.

But Margate, "Good old Margate," as they call her, is as lively and attractive as ever. Joy is in all the

air. There are greetings and shoutings all day long on sand and cliff. Away they go, morning, noon, and night, in brakes and on bicycles. Little yachts sail out of the harbour, and huge steamers disgorge and swallow again great gulps of excursionists sworn to take every inch of enjoyment out of a brief holiday. Say what they will, sneer as they will, turn up their fastidious noses as they like, chatter as they must do about free-and-easy manners, vulgarity, cockneydom, and so on, it is still the dear, delightful Margate of the people, where some of us, with faithful companions departed and old friends still wandering on, have spent some of the happiest hours of our lives, if we are honest enough to own it. The Margate of many memories must ever be there. Now, as ever, it is "Margate, ahoy!"

As to the delicious Margate air, we want no doctors' certificates, or special analysis, or scientific reports to tell us that it is the purest and the best in all England, and I think I, for one, know my English watering-places pretty well.

My own experience is that directly one issues from the London, Chatham,

and Dover station, the affectionate Margate air seems to take you lovingly by the neck, and blow its salt, fresh kisses in your face, and sweeten you and freshen you, and exhilarate the mind and spirits, and blow to the winds of heaven all the cares and worries and anxieties of life.

By the time the hotel is reached you are another man. Such a tonic was never found so efficacious, so certain, or so direct. I once told a doctor that I believed that when all hope seemed gone, and the end seemed very near, if a patient could be taken and placed in a bath-chair at the sea end of the Extension (or on one of the comfortable reclining chairs in the new and beautiful summer garden of the "Cliftonville Hotel"), strength would return, and life would linger on. But here is a case in point, a true story for which I can vouch, and it only occurred the other day. A dear friend of mine was overworked, unnerved, upset and depressed with business cares, a perfect wreck of his old energetic, active self. Naturally, he consulted a physician. It was the old story. He must give up business of every kind, break it all away, and

take a rest of several months. Easier said than done. A rest of that kind would have meant absolute ruin to him and to others, financially and commercially involved as he was in huge undertakings.

He came home from that consulting-room more depressed, anxious, and careworn than before. It seemed like the sealing of his doom. His condition so alarmed those near and dear to him that a consultation was secured with another physician of not quite so despondent frame of mind. He rose superior to milk diet and that terror to the energetic temperament—enforced idleness. The second doctor had a hobby for baths and water cures and systems, of course, abroad, amongst strangers, and surrounded by languages which my friend scarcely understood.

At last the patient took the bull by the horns, and cross-examined the doctor. Rest would mean ruin, foreign baths would mean misery. At last he "out with it," as the children say. "Might he go to Margate?" He knew Margate, he loved Margate. Margate never failed to do him good. Margate meant life to him, at any rate. The

fashionable physician smilingly consented, the good doctor gave in. And Margate it was. The first man I met on the Extension a few days after was my sick friend, as brown as a berry; in fact, the very picture of health, and his cure was solely and simply the Margate air. I had not proceeded very far when I met another very old friend, a lady who resides, when at home, with her happy family in one of the most fashionable quarters in Paris, and who knows, none better, what luxury and refinement are, a gourmet, and, in her way, a leader of fashions.

I opened my eyes with astonishment. "What, you here, at Margate?" I asked, with a surprised air.

"Yes, and why not? The place does me good; I have known it all my life. The boys and girls are happy here. We can do as we like, and no one interferes with us, and it is a positive relief after the studied formality of Parisian life."

"And the chef?" I asked slyly, knowing my friend's partiality for the good things of this life, and feeling that Margate cooking, however excellent, might be a trial after Paris and her restaurants.

"Yes," she answered, "I have brought the old chef with me, and, Paris bred and born, he actually does not despise unconventional Margate. He is by the sea every morning at six on his way to the market with his basket."

The day I arrived at Margate, the familiar place was all aglow and golden with the setting sun, the most glorious of summer days. It was the lounging hour, which I always enjoy so much at the "Inn of Strange Meetings." The half-weary excursionists were all coming home from jaunts and trips from every direction on the popular holiday island. Some had gone as far as Minster, or the picturesque Ville of Sarre; others had penetrated to historic and mediæval Canterbury. Some, amidst the tootling of horns, had contented themselves with Westgate-on-Sea — pretty, select, artistic, and decorous; others had wandered to Rossetti-land at many-bungalowed Birchington.

But the noisiest, merriest crew, shouting and singing, hailed from Pegwell Bay Cliff, which has been familiar to me for over fifty years and more. Almost the last trace of tea-garden life exists at Pegwell, and

I can remember it in full swing in London all the way from the "Angel" at Islington, past the "Belvedere," with its racket-ground, and the "Cock" at Highbury, right away to Hornsey "Wood House"; and from the City Road turnpike at Sarson's Vinegar Yard, right along the New North Road, past the "North Pole" and the Sturt and Arlington estates, to leafy Canonbury, far into the heart of the country.

It is pleasant, that lounging hour before dinner at cheery Margate. We look up our friends at the comfortable, well-managed, and old-fashioned "York" or the "White Hart." We peep into the "Ruby Buvette," known as the "Ruby Boo," for a tonic and a cheery greeting, or enjoy just one stroll on the pier or a smart walk to the Cliftonville end, where on the breezy cliff we meet some familiar friend, or welcome some smiling face. "Margate, ahoy!" and the delicious air rings with the hearty greeting. At other places you must be discreet and decorous, but at Margate you may shout, or you are not in the true local vein. Formality is out of the question at Margate. Here we are men and

brothers indeed. The niggers at Margate are all "Uncles," and they bear their Margate nomenclature on their jaunty straw hats. The boys at Margate are all "pals," the girls are all "dearies." It is one huge family party. No introductions are needed or insisted upon when "strolling on the pier, boys," or "sailing on the briny," or footing it at nightfall in the Hall-by-the-Sea. Our old friend, Margate, has borrowed this idea from her first-cousin, Yarmouth, round the corner. Dinner over, they make, of course, for the Extension to hear the band—and a very good band it is, for Margate is strictly "professional," and knows what good music is. There are a good many first violins, trombones, and flutes walking about in the critical crowd, and no scamped work will do for Margate. So they encore their favourite pieces and tunes, and exchange for a moment the eternal negro minstrelsy for Beethoven, Mozart, and Wagner, with an occasional dash of Sullivan and still-remembered Offenbach.

The sea air blows fresh to-night, but health and life are contained in the pressure of every inch of it. Still,

it is as well for the cautious lady to bring a warm cloak on her arm, and for her companion to have a neck-wrap in his pocket. Thus protected, they can hide, two and two, in the sheltered corners, and whisper with their heads together — as they ever must and ever will at Margate—if not disposed to walk round and round, eternally round and round, till it makes one giddy to look at them.

Suddenly and mysteriously the pier and the Extension empty at nine o'clock or thereabouts. As if by a given signal the crowd melts away, the band has departed, the music is done so far as the Extension is concerned. But the place has other attractions. Here they shout and sing, but at Margate they also dance.

The old-world Assembly Rooms in Cecil Square and the favourite Hall-by-the-Sea are never deserted on the hottest August night. And, ye gods! they do dance indeed, and in good earnest, at mad, intoxicating Margate.

The women are irrepressible. They are stung with the gadfly or tarantula of dancing. They are dancing mad.

The men are nowhere, as compared to the women in a Margate ball-room. It

is a case of "one down t'other come on."

The men are all beaten and exhausted when the women are as fresh as paint—and powder—will allow them to be. And what steps! What brilliant evidence of the suburban dancing academy! What twirls! What roulades! What pirouettes! What shrieks of delight at the double quadrilles and lancers! What an evoe! all round at the new barn dance romp! The valse has become a slow and stately affair, but in the cotillon the Margate men and maidens let themselves go with a will. And so, after "God save the Queen," and anticipations of many a jolly evening to come, the balls break up, once more life ceases to throb, lights disappear one by one, and at midnight I am left comparatively alone, taking in the last breath of air on the deserted cliffs.

If I had my way I would remain out here watching the lights at sea for hours; but I feel the waiters and porters are hating me for keeping them up with a long day before them; so I, too, turn in, and am soon lulled to sleep by the music of wind and waves upon cliff and shore.

Sleep in such air is sound and deep,

but sweet and brief. The sun has scarcely risen, the mist has hardly cleared away, before once more it is "Margate, Ahoy!" It is not the fashion to go out to bathe at Margate without a shout or a scream.

Well, we did it all of us when we were young, and even now, recall a holiday at Scarborough, when Edmund Yates, and S. B. Bancroft, and Arthur Cecil, and many more were among the bathers who had for a cry of Freemasonry, in health and spirits, "Wang! wang!" And so we plunged into the waves to refresh us for a long day of pleasure, and rides, and drives, and picnics, at which Adelaide Neilson, Mrs. Bancroft and many more favourites of the hour presided, and helped to gild and illuminate the "lexicon of youth," in which, now as ever, there is "no such word as fail."

To sleep is impossible for very long when shouting bathers are going down to sea, when early bands are making morning merry, when the first coach horn is on the "tootle, tootle, too,' when once more there is a prospect of a glorious day, when the sails are being set in the harbour, and life is on the spring again. The sybarite will

open the bedroom window wide, and let the air and the sun pour in, and after the little breakfast will enjoy the letters, and the first pipe, and the favourite newspaper alone and calm, for hurried rising and dressing is the greatest mistake when in holiday mood.

And so I leave "good old Margate" as I found it, in the sun, the glorious sun, in a faultless sky, blue as the waves to which it gives its purpureal dye. The old round is beginning again. Up in the Cliftonville Gardens, when others are splashing in the water, and digging in the sands, and sitting at the feet of the niggers on the cliff, and reading on the pier, and sailing on the sea, and careering over the island in brakes and on bikes, I am conscious of and deeply interested in a tête-a-tête under the bushes and the flowers. They meet, they chat, and soon they ride or drive away, and may be found at lunch at Canterbury, or Ramsgate, or at Broadstairs, or perhaps later on tea drinking and shrimp eating at Pegwell Bay. Who knows or cares?

They will turn up at table d'hôte just as if nothing had happened. It is holiday time, life is short, holidays are

very brief and few, a pulse of pleasure is in all the air. An Horatian epicureanism is instilled into the scene. "Nunc est bibendum, nunc pede libero pulsanda tellus." It is the same all over the world. "C'est l'Amour; l'Amour." "Wein, Wieb und Gesang."

There is no use in moralising. It is Margate!

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The Sussex Queen.

THERE seems to be but one formula for success in literature, or, if not for success, at least for that healthy encouragement that inspires ambition in early youth. You have to commit your virgin thoughts to paper in the silence of a solitary bed-chamber, or in some forlorn London garret; you have to "sally out"—these literary tyros always "sally out"—in the dead of night as if you were some midnight marauder, burglar, or thief, pop your maiden manuscript into the editor's box, to which you are attracted by sentiment, or chance.

Then you have to wait, having confided your secret to no human being, not even a loved mother or a confidential sister, for that would break the charm of mystery; no, you have to wait patiently and alone, in an agony of doubt, until one day you see yourself in all the glory and majesty of print. It looked so small, so paltry, so

insignificant, in manuscript, but how glorious, how colossal, in the grand dignity of type! So much of the task accomplished, you have—according to the accepted formula—to go up a deserted London court or alley and under a gas lamp—yes, ever under a gas lamp—you have to read through blinding tears of joy, the story, or the essay, or the poem, which is to astonish the world and make you immortal. And this is the first start of everyone, so far as I can see, in literary life.

Well, it is not for me to say how far true or untrue this tale may be of others. It has been told to me by every successful writer of my acquaintance, and all I know is that it is absolutely true of myself. I was reminded of it one glorious afternoon recently when idling along the King's Road, Brighton, on a hot summer's day, looking at the carriages, looking at the people, looking at the sea, and, of course, looking at the Brighton shop windows. One of my earliest efforts in literature was an article very cumbrously headed, "Brighton and Back for Half-a-Crown, every Sunday and Monday." I suppose the jingle fascinated me, but I went through the

ortho dox ormula. I wrote the paper alone and unobserved, I started out to post it in the dead of night, I popped it into a desirable editor's box, I had the intense satisfaction of seeing it in print, I read it up a court under a gas lamp; but the literary romance broke down at the important fact that I was never paid for it.

It was a far different Brighton then. No "Grand Hotel" or "Métropole," no West Pier or Aquarium, no sea-walls, no fashionable Hove, no dreams of a Madeira Road, or an electric railway along the beach; only the "Norfolk," the "Bedford," the "Albion," and the good old "Ship" were celebrated as hotels, and one's pleasure consisted in wandering about the Pavilion Gardens, the old Steine, and a stroll on the Chain Pier, a sacred duty that I should have performed to this day, had not the dear old Chain Pier been washed away with "Ellen Terry," the Pan-Anglican, Wagnerite stall-holder, who was a fixture, for it was at the end of the old Chain Pier that I scribbled the best part of my first Brighton article in a twopenny note-book. If I mistake not, I travelled down to Brighton on

that memorable occasion in an open third-class carriage. In those days the third-class carriages were only trucks with benches in them; very pleasant, no doubt, when the wind was in a convenient direction, but extremely disagreeable when the smoke from the engine was blown straight into your face, and transformed you—particularly in the tunnels—from a smart excursionist into a grimy sweep. If, indeed, my first experience in an open third-class excursion carriage was not on the Brighton line, it is absolutely certain that it occurred on the occasion of several annual visits to Ramsgate, and especially when as boys we made furtive evening trips to the Tivoli Gardens, where I was astonished and puzzled, not in the least shocked, when a musical comedian, on an *al fresco* platform, sang a ditty with the refrain:

Think! Think! Think! Think!
Think of your head in the morning.

To which ditty I was begged by my parents, guardians, godfathers, and godmothers to close my youthful but susceptible ears.

On the occasion of my first visit to Brighton, anxious for a few hours to

get rid of my third-class companions in the open third-class truck, I disdained the attention of the same earnest waiters who stand to this day all along West Street in tail coats and evening ties, urging upon the hungry excursionist on a hot August day the greasy attractions of a pungent-smelling Irish stew, mountainous joints of beef and mutton, savoury pies, and roast duck with stuffing. Even then, with the hardihood of youth, I strolled into the "Bedford" for lunch, where I am certain must have been enacted over again the scene of David Copperfield and the waiter. If the solemn attendant had consumed all my lunch and polished off my modest tankard of ale I should not have had the courage to say a word. The instinct of a journalist that was in me suggested a visit to the "Bedford" by way of contrast to the humble scenes in which I was forced to be an actor. I wanted to describe everything. My farce on this occasion might have been good, but my high comedy was intolerable. In fact, the "Bedford" incident I may conscientiously declare now to have been an absolute failure.

Brighton, the acknowledged Queen

of Sussex, certainly does not intend to let the grass grow under her feet. It is not her policy to stand still or indulge in any idle dreaming. If her neighbours advance, she must advance also. The novelty suggested by another must of necessity be adopted, with added improvements, by her. Consequently, Brighton has kept well abreast of the times, as will be seen from the "Métropole Hotel"—no longer a novelty, but a delight to all Brighton visitors—her vastly improved West Pier, and her Madeira Road, which is Brighton's latest fancy in the way of material improvement, an attraction for visitors both in winter and summer. Brighton, as we all know, has a pleasant division in its hospital camp. Some of the visitors prefer the Hove end of Brighton, which promises in time to extend as far as Worthing; others swear by the Kemp Town end, which has, and has had for years past, its finality in the glorious, healthy, breezy Rottingdean Down. I must own that I have a sneaking partiality for the Kemp Town end of Brighton. It is not supposed to be so fashionable, but I always breathe better there. In fact, I believe there are three distinct airs

at Brighton—the air of the beach and King's Road, the air of Kemp Town and the Upper Cliff, and the air of the race-course Down and the famous Dyke.

Dr. Dabbs, the medical attendant of the last laureate, Lord Tennyson, no mean authority on pulmonary complaints, has made this valuable discovery at Shanklin in the Isle of Wight, and he regulates the residences of his patients accordingly, winter and summer.

And so it is at Brighton. Some constitutions thrive better at Hove, others pine for the breezes at Kemp Town and love the grass cliff, now crumbling away, leading to Rottingdean — most picturesque of Sussex villages — with its fine church and rare old houses dating centuries back. But no one who has driven from the Madeira Road to the Upper Cliff can have failed to notice that there are at least two distinct climates at Brighton. Invalids and lazy loiterers, who want rest more than violent exercise, will bless the Brighton authorities for the gift of the Madeira Road. A huge arcade, invaluable for sultry or wet weather, has been erected

under the warm cliff, extending from the Aquarium to almost the end of Kemp Town. It is a kind of miniature palm garden, facing the sea, and in the centre of it we have reading rooms, refreshment rooms, and all the luxuries of a Continental Spa. As matters stand at present, the Kemp Town visitors are just as well off for shelters, lawns, band stands, and electric railways as their neighbours at Hove, with their sea-walk and pretty Sunday Parade. All that the Madeira Road Spa requires now is some health-giving spring, a new chalybeate water, some fresh fanciful cure, which, if well advertised by the faculty, would send all the world and his wife to drink the wonderful waters of Brighton. A much neglected and invaluable chalybeate spring has recently been discovered at Shanklin, has been satisfactorily analysed, and is now turned on to the hall of one of the principal hotels there. Why cannot our old friend Brighton make a similar discovery, or, by means of pipes, convey some medicinal spring straight to the New Madeira Spa? I can see in the not very distant future this Madeira Road crowded morning, afternoon, and

evening with a fashionable society, all provided with little cups and glasses, walking, talking, and arguing, and eternally discussing their different ailments as they are bound to do at every "water cure" all over the world. And failing the original Brighton spring, why not make an artificial one with the far-famed Brighton seltzer? It would do the drinker just as much good as the vast majority of Continental and English springs, for I am confident that the "water cure" is procured just as much in the change of habits, diet, and scene to the patient as in the actual washing process. Early to bed and early to rise is the main and most important principle. And if the "cave-dwellers" at Brighton, who, hidden under the rocks and cliffs, waste the precious hours that should be devoted to sleep over the fascinations of "poker," and "nap," and "baccarat," and maybe "roulette," were to appear at daybreak on the Spa, with glasses not wholly empty of spirit, to which the new Brighton seltzer might be judiciously applied, they might not, according to the refrain of the old song recently quoted, "Think of their heads in the morning," particularly

during the race week, when Brighton, as all the world knows, changes her complexion and her *clientèle* completely.

Brighton never closes her doors on any guest of whatsoever class. If, during the race week, the Queen of Sussex is worshipped by reckless Bohemians, who care very little whether they rest in a bed or on the beach, it must be remembered that they, like the Arabs, fold their tents and "silently steal away" when the race game is transferred to other quarters, and its din and temptation elsewhere. I can remember the time when I, in the company of several racing friends, made our Goodwood headquarters at Bognor, when we drove over every day through a charming country, and followed on with Brighton and Lewes, as a matter of course, to complete the Sussex fortnight. But now-a-days the Bohemian division, as a rule, thanks to the excellent train services, does all the three meetings from London. In those never-to-be-forgotten days Brighton was more aristocratic and fantastically Bohemian than ever during the races.

The West Pier was crowded with bath chairs, containing some of the prettiest and best-dressed women in

England; and when the music was over, the lights out, and a "stirrup cup" taken at Mutton's, if you strolled along the King's Road, someone would come up to you, touch his hat, slip a card into your hand, to intimate that you would be made welcome at some miniature Crockford's, at one of the innocent-looking houses with a garden sea-front; and once inside those doors the goddess Fortune would have to assist you indeed, in the heroic but futile effort to get home with a full note-case. Free suppers, free potations, and unlimited roulette—those were the giddy joys of the old race days in Brighton. Such temptations now are reserved for private *séances* in the caves and social gatherings in private hotel rooms, or even bedrooms, for where men are gathered together, there they gamble.

Those who never visit Brighton between one race week and another would scarcely recognise their old friend the West Pier. It is now adorned with glass shelters, cosy corners, shops, and a fine Pavilion, licensed for dramatic entertainments and concerts. The new West Pier is a kind of bazaar on board an anchored ship. Here you

get any amount of sea breeze without a suggestion of sea-sickness. A newer pier still is in course of erection near the Aquarium, and looks at present like the skeleton of some huge whale, or the lines of a monster ship being rapidly constructed on the Clyde.

What its counter attractions will be, history at present declines to say, but they must be very considerable, or the last Brighton novelty would not have been taken in hand. But what surprised me most was that Brighton has suddenly, thanks to the extension of the West Pier, been turned into a seaport. You could always have a shilling sail off the beach, or a day on the briny for some inconsiderable sum; but to-day, from the end of the pier, you can steam away to Hastings, Eastbourne, round the Isle of Wight, and even to Boulogne, if you are so minded. Half-a-dozen steamers start daily from the end of Brighton Pier, and the excursions are unquestionably popular, giving to the Brighton visitors a jaunty, rakish, nautical, hitch-up-my "breeks" sort of air, reminding one more of Surrey melodrama under the rule of the late Dick Sheppard, than of the correct costume of the Royal Yacht Squadron

at Cowes. The sea must be in the veins of every Englishman, for the veriest cockney, when at Brighton, turns himself for the moment into an amateur Jack Tar, who is invariably accompanied by a female Billy Taylor.

I suppose there is no seaside place in all England that boasts such a variety of amusements as good old Brighton, for it is not as elsewhere, pleasure by day to be followed by dulness by night. That is not the Brighton prescription at all. We have Brighton by night as well as by day. The celebrated old Theatre Royal, endeared to us during the long and admirable reign of the Nye Charts, holds its own against all comers, and need never feel rivalry or competition. Every Thursday afternoon some special company comes down from London with a popular play of the hour, whilst the pick of the provincial companies visit Brighton as one of the very best of the first-class towns.

But, to tell the truth, Brighton never ceases its round of merriment from day-break to sunset.

All day long, heavily laden cabs, packed with luggage, are racing along the roads to and from the station;

smart four-horse coaches are continually starting from the "Old Ship," to show romantic visitors the glories of the Sussex woods and downs, and castles and landscapes; and there is always a merry buzz and hum in Brighton, exhilarating to the constitution and soothing to the nerves. As a well-known writer has already observed, the value of Brighton and the certainty of its cure is contained not so much in the air as on the faces of its inhabitants. Go up to the station to meet a train or start by one; go on to the piers, or on the beach, where the children make a flower garden, paddling in their rainbow skirts with a background of grey shingle; go on to the parade among the carriages, or to the Downs and the Dyke among the hares and the rabbits, and you will see no sad or careworn or weary faces.

The breezes seem to soften the furrowed faces, and the exhilaration drives dull care away. In fact, this cheery and faithful companion, the foe to no man and the friend to countless thousands, seems to metaphorically chuck you under the chin and slap your back directly the sea sparkles in your face, saying: "Cheer up, old fellow! Never say die!"

The "New Battle" of Hastings.

HAVE I accidently overslept myself, like Rip Van Winkle, turned summer into winter, missed a lovely English autumn, and by some mystery changed the sparkling, exhilarating sea of our own South coast for the tideless Mediterranean that washes the orange and lemon groves of the Riviera? I thought when I dozed off contentedly on the sea front, soothed by subdued conversation, the pleasant prattle of children, and the music of innumerable bands, that I was back again in venerable old Hastings, the premier Cinque Port, that alone, among all its rivals, retains so much of its rare antiquity, its picturesque fisher-life, its red-brown sails, and its beached boats on the sun-kissed shingle.

I imagined I had tired myself out with a climb to the old castle, ivy-clad, romantic, eloquent of old England in feudal times, which still, crowning the cliff, keeps watch and

ward over the new twin sisters, Hastings and St. Leonards. Unless I have been dreaming, indeed, I walked this morning where Shanks's mare can ever go, and the bicycle bell is seldom heard, away past pretty Ore to the Fairlight Glen, the Lover's Seat, and the Dripping Well, teeming with happy memories. Is it not true that just now I was idly shop-gazing in Robertson Street, for the seaside shops always seem to me to be the best in England, prettier to look at, and better displayed than elsewhere; and I was strolling round the theatres as I ever do to find *Our Boys* apparently as young and as popular as ever, with Tom Thorne as large as life as old Middlewick in a coloured picture frame?

Unless I am very much mistaken, the summer day slipped amiably by with wanderings in the fishing village and explorings of the beautiful Alexandra Park, with its trees beneath the shade, "for talking age and whispering lovers made," its lakes and its arbours, and tennis grounds, and swans, and chalets, a pleasant relief after sea-gazing on Eversfield Place until the eyes ache with the strong glare of sea and shingle, of white road and whiter cliff.

Was it not true that I had recently tramped up to the very extent of the Marina at St. Leonards to see how the old spot looked without the archway, demolished, it is said, to accommodate the never-ending traffic, the bicycles, the traps, and the pleasure cars bound for a visit to Baby Bexhill, which has just celebrated its christening, with Hastings and St. Leonards for fairy godmothers?

I awaken and rub my eyes with astonishment at the unexpected turn things have taken at these haunts of perpetual pleasure. It cannot surely be sober, old conservative England, where we are said "to take our pleasures sadly," and where for years—lost years never to be recovered—we have neglected to take a leaf out of the book of our neighbour out there as far as the eye can see, across the "silver streak" of ocean wave. This cannot be Hastings—ancient, historical, many-chartered, William-the-Conqueror Hastings—with its shop-fronts laden with multi-coloured "confetti"—not the grey chalk pills and gritty refuse that used to torture the eyes and spoil the uncovered garments, and irritate the skin, and ruin the hair of the old wild days of confetti fights on the Riviera,

but circlets of harmless coloured paper —white, red, green, blue, orange, and crimson — literally "hundreds and thousands" of paper pellets, reminding one of the wafers with which our grandfathers and grandmothers used to seal up their three-cornered *billets-doux*. Has Hastings at last been over-persuaded to tempt the passer-by with the serpentine toys requiring a dexterous fling and causing endless merriment at Carnival time?

It cannot be Hastings or St. Leonards either. I must have arrived by accident in the tumble-down streets of little Hyères of the palm trees, or been passed on to Cannes, Monte Carlo, Nice, or Mentone; for here, as there, the sun is shining; and here, as there, the air is pure; and here, as there, anticipation of pretty, dainty, attractive (never rowdy) pleasure is in the very atmosphere. Here, at old-fashioned Hastings, masks and ribbons and dominoes, of every hue in the rainbow, are exposed for sale, and flowers in abundance are being landed at the old Cinque Port, wherewith the inhabitants will pelt one another and decorate their carriages, their horses, their bicycles, and their noble selves on the week when

Hastings and St. Leonards have elected to make merry indeed.

Here, all this August week, they will be laughing and singing in groups and processions all the way from Eversfield Place to Warrior Square, amidst trumpets and marches, "shooting folly as it flies," and winding up the evening with *al fresco* dances and electric-lighted gardens, and merry masqueraders at the Alexandra Park. Here, in a lovely garden, if I mistake not, will be a prettier sight than was ever seen by anyone now living, either at historical Vauxhall, with its famous sandwiches, concerts, and thousands of additional delights; or at Cremorne on a fashionable night; or at Anerley; or at Highbury Barn; or even at the modern Crystal Palace, Earl's Court, or Olympia; for to the music, dances, and songs, will be added fireworks by the undefeated Brock, and "high jinks" generally, until daylight does appear. Hastings broke the English record last year, but this can only be considered as a dress rehearsal for the Carnival week of 1896, which promised to set a cheerful example to all the seaside pleasure resorts all over the kingdom. "In choirs and places where they sing, here

followeth the anthem." This rubric will be interpreted for the future, "In seaside places and on parades where they shout, here followeth the Carnival!"

But if a marked Riviera tone is impressed upon us all in the shops, with their sacks, and dishes, and bowls of confetti, their smocks and spangles, their Pierrot and Pierrette dresses, their suggestive serpentine scrolls, and their myriads of flowers, all ready for the new Battle of Hastings, what shall I say of the sea-front all the way from the Marina at sunny St. Leonards to the magnificent Palace Hotel at happy, healthy Hastings? The "Palace," with its delightful covered lounge or verandah, opposite the pier, and in the most fashionable part of the town, is, thanks to the enterprise of Messrs. Spiers and Pond, the most popular hotel in Hastings. The Palace Hotel deserves its popularity, for it has many attractions. It is admirably situated (being sheltered from the North and East winds), the cuisine is perfection, the cellar unrivalled, the management all that could be desired, and the tariff is strictly moderate. To return, however, to the decorations.

From Hastings to St. Leonards, tribunes, seats, and covered pavilions, gay in scarlet cloth, flags, and trophies, stretch along the whole sea-front, turning their backs for the nonce to the sea; and down the gay avenue, a veritable tournament ground between the houses, the shops, and the improvised pavilions, go the confetti-flingers, and the flower fighters, and the decorated carriages, and the fantastically adorned bicycles, and the masqueraders, and the music, and, in fact, all the fun of the fair, which only wants brilliant weather for a week to make the South coast Carnival a very exceptional and splendid success.

Last year, as I have said, the English record was completely beaten; this year the sister ports intend to show that by daytime the Riviera itself may have a rival, whilst at night the Tintelleries Gardens at Boulogne, and the Palm Gardens at Frankfort, and the Schutzen Fests of Switzerland, and the artistic processions in the Tonne Halle at Dusseldorf will have to look to their laurels.

And now for one word of timely warning, and it is given in all sincerity. When old Shylock went out to supper, with the keys of his household hanging

to his gaberdine, he left his property comparatively unprotected, and the consequence was that the cash-box of the venerable old gentleman—ducats in plenty, Leah's turquoise, and all—were flung out of the window by pretty Jessica into the arms of love-sick Lorenzo: But, according to recent experience, "there be land rats and water rats" on these festival and carnival occasions even more formidable than harmless Lorenzo and Jessica.

I was present not long ago at a very pretty outdoor holiday given at the little town of Havant. There too, in addition to foot races, hurdle races, and bicycle competitions, we had prizes for decorated bicycles, and very admirable they were. Girls in corn-coloured dresses, with flaxen hair peeping out of sheaves, and sickles, and scarlet poppies and blue flowers in the wheat; girls in bridal white, under canopies of stephanotis and tuberoses; Gretchens embowered in marguerites; and dusky-haired beauties under canopies of purple and violet asters. Havant, for a small town, did the thing right well, and it persuaded me that an era of good taste and artistic rivalry at public festivals is rapidly setting in.

The *fete* at little Havant was so successful that naturally, on this sunny summer afternoon, all the world, with his wife and daughters, were up at the Recreation Ground. Business was entirely suspended; the shops were all closed; Havant took a general holiday; not even the maidservant had been left behind. Some of the deserted houses were not even protected by a dog. The consequence was that when happy and contented Havant came home to supper, a goodly proportion of the inhabitants discovered to their sorrow that their *Lares et Penates* had been rudely destroyed, and that "the light-fingered gentry," as they used to be called, had made short work with the cash-boxes, plate chests, and jewel cases of Havant. They had "gone over" the houses with true professional skill, robbed right and left, and my only wonder is that they had not, by a sublimated cynicism, stolen the cups, tankards, and handsome presents which were at that moment being competed for on the Recreation Ground of Havant! But then your modern burglar is no humorist.

It is supposed that the lower riff-raff of the betting fraternity, discouraged by the police at the sports, and unable

to spot the winner, took their revenge by looting hospitable Havant on their way home in the broad daylight. With the police and the inhabitants safe at the sports the ransacking of Havant was a comparatively easy task. A warning like this should never be missed, so it would be well if Hastings and St. Leonards took a hint during the Carnival week and protected their property. "When the cat's away"—we know the rest.

If it be true that "folly has its sweetness and its savour in due season and in place," then, indeed, the Hastings experiment will be watched elsewhere with intense interest by such as have advocated for years past a healthy and drastic reform amongst the amusements of the people. The mistake of closing the Queen's highway need never occur again. The rights of the people must be respected. The reform of the music-halls simply meant a lighter, not a tighter, hand. The reform of the summer pleasures of the people will only mean a release of oppressive order and violently administered authority. The people of every country are dull and often offensive in their pleasures whenever they are

oppressed, but give them liberty and they will order their amusements in the best possible and most artistic fashion. A dozen years ago it would have been considered a mad scheme indeed to bring some of the grace and charm of the Riviera Carnival home in England. But we have done more, as I am certain time will show; we have eliminated from them everything that is objectionable and dangerous. Evening entertainments have been virtually forbidden for years because of the inherent danger in them, whereas the public has been permitted to be its own policeman, and an appeal has been made to the good sense of the majority. This is the root of the English public school system.

Trust everybody, and the community will respect themselves. It must ever be the rule of our varied pleasures when generously and intelligently administered. With fine weather, and the generous co-operation of the visitors, a pretty Flower *Fete* or Carnival may be the pioneer of healthy and wholesome pleasure in many of the "summer isles of Eden lying in dark purple spheres of sea."

Beach-Land.

THREE healthy English lads flying their kites on a sunburnt common; a couple of young ladies deep in a novel, the only occupants of dozens of comfortable benches facing a broad gravelled walk; little children scattered here and there at intervals, digging, and carrying, and busily paddling among the piles, and shells, and seaweed scattered over a noble tract of sand; a nursemaid under a huge umbrella, intent on an old book from the lending library; a long row of houses facing common and sand, pleasant and picturesque in its irregularity; a low-built, romantic inn, overgrown with leaves and surrounded by shrubs, and flowers, and cosy arbours, situated in the middle of a parched and scorched desert; a Lilliputian harbour, and a baby light-house with a bright green cupola; a windmill whose sails are being swiftly turned by a brisk and refreshing breeze, and in the distance the masts, and flags, and cordage of a busy wharf—this is

the picture that presents itself when I look for the first time on Littlehampton, a land of peace, which I would introduce to all who desire to be left alone and to enjoy undisturbed the luxury of rest.

Just where the river Arun flows into the sea, pleasantly situated under the hill crowned by the towers and forest trees of Arundel, at the point where the passengers take ship for Honfleur and prepare for a summer tour through Normandy, reached by a short branch line from Ford Junction on the main Brighton and Portsmouth Railway, you will find Littlehampton, and those who enjoy Beach-Land will be thankful for the discovery. For Littlehampton is all beach and breezes. At most seaside resorts the houses assert themselves, and the seaside attractions are dwarfed by their presence. In many a watering-place, what with lodgings, and town, and bathing machines, the sands or shingle and esplanade are seriously encroached upon. It is not so at Littlehampton. Here there is an expression of breadth, and width, and expanse, and breathing room. There is no jostling, or crowding, or confusion in this silent

Beach-Land. The clean white town stands modestly far away in the background. The long row of lodging-houses keeps discreetly aloof from the common sacred to cricket, and kites, and croquet. There is room for hundreds more bathing tents on the sands, and the eye is refreshed by an expanse of blue, unbroken sea.

It is very doubtful if many will be interested in the discovery that here Ham, the assassin, was slain by Arviragus, at the time when Gwyder defeated Claudius. All of us who retain such pleasant recollections of the old seaside family of Peggotty cannot believe that Ham ever was an assassin, and even the children, with their first Noah's Ark, would be shocked by the discovery that the modest and inoffensive little gentleman with the long yellow coat and the tall walking stick was the ancestor of a vulgar murderer. The authors of the next guide-book should discover some more genial and salty derivation for this pleasant spot, for everything about Littlehampton is opposed to the very suggestion of horror.

It is a city of refuge, not a battle

ground. It opens its arms to all who are wounded or tired after the fight. When the nerves are torn and unstrung, here is Beach-Land with its fresh smell of seaweed, and its delightful silence. If life is a round of hurry and care, and home all the long year is a halt rather than a resting place, here is home then at last, and the laughter of the children comes rippling up with the waves on the beach. If some celebrated book or pamphlet, or treatise, has over and over again been put aside for want of time, there are dozens of comfortable benches on the beach, and no distracting sound. Let there be no mistake about the qualities of Littlehampton. It has a town band, and some Assembly Rooms, and is occasionally visited by a conjuror. But gaiety is opposed to the general idea of the place. Littlehampton and Bognor are as necessary in their way as Brighton and St. Leonards. Each one to his own taste, and if Beach-Land is dull, what of that? It prides itself on its repose, and is consecrated to silence. Is it dull, I would ask, to bathe, and boat, and read? Is it tedious to

enjoy the pleasant prattle of little children, to make their kites, and mend their nets, and bowl for the boys on the common? Is it a bore to take a boat out to sea with a bronzed fisherman, and through a long afternoon pull up prizes from the stern while the wind rushes through the hair and the barque rocks pleasantly, or to row under the woods of Arundel?

Is there no amusement in finding relief from the everlasting beach and the eternal ocean, the scorched benches and the parched common, among the ropes, and boats, and cranes, and trucks of the long quay? They are inspecting the hold of the Honfleur boat, and landing on English ground a goodly store of eggs, fruit, and French butter; and to-morrow they will take back to France nothing but a few crates and empty baskets. A little further, see, they are filling the hold of an English ship with mighty trees and stumps and branches of tough English oak, cut from a Sussex estate hard by, which by the end of the week will be on its way to Sunderland, where they build ships. A sunburnt sailor rests from his

labour at the crane to tell his companions of a sad wreck off Dungeness, and they naturally thank God that their lives and fortunes are bound to a sailing vessel. The ferry-boat is in constant requisition, the trains come in and go out of the little station, bringing in and bearing out more merchandise. Are there, then, no opportunities and distractions for the Littlehampton lounger?

If the famous Dr. Abernethy had not been so extremely prodigal of his certificates of salubrity, and so indiscriminate in his recommendations of specially healthy spots, it is very probable his testimonial in favour of Littlehampton would have been treated with more respect than it is. But, to tell the truth, I never heard of a single individual who selected his seaside home at the suggestion of a celebrated doctor, or after a careful scrutiny of the Registrar-General's returns. The health of Beach-Land is stamped on the faces of its inhabitants. The children on the sands, the servants under the umbrellas, the boys on the common, the sailors on the quay, and the very porters at the railway station are standing

testimonials in favour of a place whose charms are not universally appreciated. Littlehampton has not, I fear, been saved from the slackness of business which has been felt this year at many of its sister watering-places.

Goethe, after a neat description of his ancestry, winds up with the declaration—

> Sind nun die Elemente nicht
> Aus dem complex zu trennen;
> Was ist denn an dem ganzen Wicht
> Original zu nennen?

"If, then, the elements are not to be separated from the whole, what can one call original in the descendant?" To discover, even after a walk round the coast of England, an original watering-place, is next to an impossibility. It is not unfair, however, generally to divide the seaside homes of England into two classes, the gay and the contemplative. It would be hopeless to attract to these silent sands and empty commons those whose cup of pleasure is not nearly drained, whose life is gaiety and whose sole pleasure is excitement; but if it be true that early to bed and early to rise make a man healthy and wealthy and wise, it is quite

certain that Littlehampton, when the season is over, will be blessed by the Registrar-General, by charitable institutions, and by the publishers of the metropolis. Very high in the long list of contemplative watering-places I should place Littlehampton; and though one opinion may be of little value, it was with no little regret that I discovered it was time the lounge should be abandoned and the contemplation of the happy scene disturbed, as I turned my back upon Beach-Land and mixed with the world again at the busy railway station.

Beautiful Bournemouth.

BOURNEMOUTH revisited! I do not suppose that there is any watering-place, haven of rest, sanitorium, or cosy nook scented with pines, and gladdened with the sun, neat, trim, and eloquent with the best expression of what must be called Victorian architecture, Victorian villas, Victorian pleasure houses, Victorian hotels, Victorian order, and Victorian comfort in all England, north to south, east to west, that has undergone more marvellous changes than the Bournemouth and Boscombe of to-day. Margate and Ramsgate have changed since my boyhood, it is true; changed since the days when my dear old friend, W. P. Frith, R.A., painted his famous picture of Ramsgate Sands, and our mothers and sisters wore "uglies" across their bonnet fronts to protect them from the sun, and we went up and down, from cliff to sand, by twisted staircases known as Jacob's

Ladders; changed since an amiable lunatic with a tasselled cap and white apron sold "alicampane" to the babies on the beach; changed since we went to the Library to enjoy a little mild gambling in the evening, and afterwards to the Tivoli Gardens in open railway trucks to hear comic songs and dance on a circular platform.

But, improved or not, there is still a trace of the old Margate and the old Ramsgate in evidence and in existence. Cecil Square is not destroyed or levelled to the earth. The flagstaff outside Margate and the flagstaff on the east cliff of Ramsgate, dedicated to so many romances, still stand. Adelaide and Wellington Crescents are still the landmarks of one's boyhood. The Ramsgate Town Hall over the market-place, where I first saw General Tom Thumb, abides as a record. And the same may be said of such popular resorts, almost improved off the face of the earth, as Scarborough and Cromer. But it is a difficult matter, I can assure you, to be whirled suddenly into Bournemouth by the 2.15 Pullman car train from Waterloo Station, and to recover, as it were, the lost ground of these eventful forty years.

It must have been during the year 1855 or thereabouts that I first made the acquaintance of Bournemouth, then little more than a fishing village. I was a boy at school at Marlborough, and, in the middle of one half-year, being very delicate, and unable to stand the piercing cold of the Wiltshire Downs, which either killed or cured, and as there were other members of the home circle who were a little puny and peaky, it was arranged that we should all meet at Bournemouth one lovely spring. The journey to Bournemouth from Marlborough was quite an undertaking in the early fifties. I know that, little pale face lonely little lad as I was, I went by train and coach, and coach and train, that I somehow or other got to Salisbury, and from there to Fordingbridge, and I felt very melancholy and alone, like another David Copperfield, and that the commercial gentlemen at the inns were very kind to me, and that at last, to my great joy, I was deposited at a house in Westover Villas—I passed it a few days ago—where I found my dear mother and a favourite sister awaiting the arrival of the little pale-faced invalid schoolboy.

We were all desperately high church in those days, Puseyites we were called, and Bournemouth was the head centre of the Anglicanism of those days. Bournemouth boasted a very high church indeed. Its pastor was an excellent follower of the Pusey, Denison, Henry of Exeter, and Meyrick school called Bennett, and there was daily service, both morning and evening, at St. Peter's, where, in the matter of ritual, they went as far as they dared do in the period of the Gorham controversy. I remember we were so devout that we scoured the Bournemouth woods for primroses, violets, and bluebells, and contributed them as a decoration for the church altar at Eastertime. Bournemouth, in 1855, seemed to me the merest village. In front of Westover Villas was a pine wood garden, where I taught my sister to play cricket, the wicket being the stump of a tree, and a smart swipe sent the ball into the little river Bourne that trickled lazily to the sea.

When my sister was not looking, or, wearied out with this unaccustomed exercise, had gone back to Westover Villas to rest, secretly, and furtively, I desecrated all the available trees in

the Westover Gardens, like another amateur Orlando, with the word "Alice," cut large with passion and a penknife. My Rosalind of that happy springtime was a fair-haired maiden, the sweetest Alice I had ever seen, proud, stately, and as active as a fawn, who wore a sky blue silk dress and immaculate silk stockings, who played and romped with other boys, but never, alas, with me. I worshipped her from afar as she sat, morning and evening, in St. Peter's Church, Bournemouth. Her father was the fashionable doctor and devout churchwarden. My love for her was too deep for words. I don't think I ever spoke to her from that day to this, and time has effaced the "Alice" cut deep into the pine trees of the Westover Gardens, forty odd years ago, an inscription, I am sure, which she never recognised. She was a dream child of the imagination, unknown, unluckily, to the Popham's of Littlecote, and the Meyricks of Bournemouth, whose name is still preserved in the Meyrick Park and golf links of modern Bournemouth. I never spoke to her, but I have never forgotten the fair-haired Alice to this hour. Where is Alice now?

My sister and I used to ramble at will through the Bournemouth pine woods, which seemed like fairyland. There was an aroma of Percy Bysshe Shelley about the Boscombe estate, then as romantic as the Black Forest, and quite as mysterious. We loved to hover round an old cottage in the tangled thicket close by the River Bourne, and within a stone's throw of the sea. On one occasion in our excursions we came upon what looked like a tomb in the very heart of the wood, dedicated to Mr. L. D. G. Tregonwell, of Cranborne, Dorsetshire, who was a kind of patron saint of early Bournemouth. I have tried in vain to discover this tomb hidden in the pine woods, and always believed it to be connected with the poet Shelley —which it was not—and imagined it contained the "*cor cordium*" rescued from the ashes of the cremated bard.

I fancied at that time I should have been an artist, for I loved to make sketches in the open air, and I know I transferred to paper many a delicious dell in the Bournemouth woods, and the Tregonwell tomb, and an ambitious picture of an old collier that one stormy night was blown high and dry upon the

sands, and that after days and days of excitement and exertion we, that is to say, half-a-dozen men and a schoolboy, managed to float by rollers and an accommodating tide. That is all we had to do in Bournemouth in the year 1855. There were no piers, no public gardens, bright with green turf and coloured hyacinths, no superb mansions, no palatial hotels, only the wild sand hills full of rabbits, the sweet-scented pine woods, and the lazy little Bourne trickling gently through the uncultured wood and through the yielding sand to the sea.

* * *

Bournemouth revisited! Yes, I found a very old friend at Bournemouth recently. It was a godsend in 1855, and it is equally welcome in 1897. I allude to Sydenham's Library, which stands now pretty much where it did forty years ago. Whenever I go to a a seaside place the first thing I do is to buy a guide. To me the unexpected always happens. Who would have believed that on Wednesday, April 7th, 1897, there would have been a snowstorm at Bournemouth? It is a fact, though, and I was in it. Bournemouth, on April 7th, 1897, was as cold as I

have ever experienced cold, save at the Riviera, which can be, when it likes, as cold as Iceland, or on the sea front at Shanghai, or in the filthy alleys of Canton, in China, or on the Bund of Yokohama, or in the east wind haunted roads of Tokio, in Japan. According to my experience, there is no place on earth unvisited by cold when the cold intends to come, and, having experienced it at its worst in the Red Sea, of all places in the world, in India, Ceylon, China, and Japan, there is no apparent reason why there should not be a combined thunderstorm and snowstorm at Bournemouth the Beautiful.

Lucky was I to find shelter at Sydenham's Library, and even more astonished than by the snowstorm to read in the guide to Bournemouth an extract from an article written by me so far back as 1877. The guide book says: "We conclude these introductory remarks by an extract from a popular London periodical of December 6th, 1877," and then it quotes much that I have recorded above of my earliest impressions of Bournemouth. I have not the slightest idea what the "popular London periodical" was; but that I

wrote what was quoted there, I am as certain as I am of my own existence. Between 1855 and 1877 there were marvellous changes in Bournemouth, as I there record, but more marvellous still is the alteration of the Bournemouth of 1877 and the "twin sisters by the sea," the Bournemouth and Boscombe of 1897.

To me very few landmarks of the old days now remain. Sydenham's Library is still a joy and a comfort to all visitors. Westover Villas stand where they did, the first and last bit of old Bournemouth. The Bellevue Hotel on the beach, and the Bath Hotel on the cliff, remain on the same spot, but vastly altered and improved in forty years. The old pine trees are there in the Westover Gardens, on which I carved the name of my fair-haired Alice! "Oh, Alice, where art thou?" was the refrain of my song yesterday. St. Peter's Church, almost rebuilt and vastly beautiful, still remains with its Lych Gate towering on the hill. But, elsewhere, the once little fishing village has become a city of villas, fantastic and ornate.

To my mind the shops of most "swagger" watering places are far

better decked out and attractive than they are in London. The shops of new Bournemouth, with its arcades and avenues, are as gay as those of Brighton or Eastbourne. In London I scarcely ever look into a shop window, and envy nothing. At Bournemouth I broke a celebrated commandment on several occasions, and thanked my stars that I was alone, for I never could resist a pleading voice.

We have all been writing recently about the wonderful changes in the Victorian Era. In what have we changed more than in our hotel life and comfort during the last quarter of a century? In the old days we had to go abroad to find a decent hotel. We raved about the Hôtel du Louvre in Paris or the Schweitzerhof at Lucerne. But I should like to know where you would find a more charming or restful hotel than the Hotel Burlington at Boscombe, a veritable "palace of art," built on an eminence overlooking the sea, in the bird-haunted Boscombe Chine. The grounds and the view from the Burlington at Boscombe are as lovely as any I have seen on the Riviera from Hyères les Palmiers to Mentone. It is a cosy, delightful home,

rather than an hotel. The leading spirit of the Burlington when I visited it was Mr. George Cooke, who owns the Buckingham Palace Hotel and that fine old mansion, with its gorgeous rooms and mantlepieces, known as the Burlington, in Cork Street. But Mr. Cooke and his friends have been able to do at Boscombe what they could not do in London. They have been able to introduce the admirable American plan, which gives the visitor a suite of rooms, sitting-room, bedroom, bath-room, and lavatory all *en suite*. There is no necessity to go outside the door, or into any mysterious passages. You are shut into your own domain, and may either remain private and at home or may take your meals in the splendid rooms common to all the guests. The hall is like the hall of an ordinary country house. Here the ladies read the papers in the morning, take afternoon tea at sunset, and allow the men to smoke and join them at coffee after dinner; so that you can either be select or mix with the gaiety and make fresh acquaintances. The English people—a little stand-off and prejudiced at first—have taken wonderfully well

to the new hotel arrangements, which are on the Continental plan, but, to my mind, vastly better in every detail. They are seen to perfection at the Burlington, in Boscombe, where, so far as I can see, people come to stay a day or so, and remain for several weeks.

And, after all, what a saving in labour, anxiety, trouble, and fatigue! No crossing of the Channel, no night journeys, no stuffy, evil-smelling sleeping cars, no restlessness or headaches. I popped myself into a Pullman car at Waterloo at 2.15, never stopped until they took the tickets at Christchurch—where the salmon come from—and long before five o'clock I was strolling in the Boscombe flower gardens, and taking in a draught of fresh air at the end of Boscombe Pier. And, after all, Boscombe is generous. If she gave us snow in the morning, it was lovelier than the Riviera in the evening!

Smart Southsea.

I HAD been in prison on our island for many sad and desolate days. Not a vestige of blue sky by day, or a golden star at night. Nothing for three miserable days and nights but sobbing, sad, and melancholy rain. Mist to the right, mist to the left, mist on the horizon, mist in the middle distance. The Isle of Wight was completely blotted out. Spithead and its forts were in tears. The Warner light could not flash through the grey gloom, and after dinner, pacing the conservatory of the "Bungalow Yacht," it was impossible for three long imprisoned evenings to see the welcome illumination on Southsea Pier. Our only consolation was to be told that the island wanted the rain very badly. Well, the island had got enough of it now, in all conscience; for had it gone on much longer we should have had to swim to the mainland. The roads became rivers, the fields lakes, the hedgerows shower-

baths, the avenues cataracts. I could not have believed that one small island could contain so much rain.

I have little doubt that it has suited the turnips, and I am very certain that a vote of thanks to the Clerk of the Weather has been voted by the partridge, for I know of more than one sportsman who rose early on September 1st, looked out of window, and took the first train back to London. The mushrooms appear to have had a gay time of it, for this morning, when the "merry, merry sunshine" was again restored, I found the "Bungalow" lawn spotted all over with little soft white knobs, and, from all accounts, the mushroom crop on our salt sea common will be able to dispute authority with the potsherds, broken bottles, and lost golf balls of which we invariably have a very plentiful harvest. For this is all that excursionists do on our deserted island. They come in wagons to have cock-shies at bottles of every shape and size, in order to torture, madden, and lacerate the bathers from the beach; and they lose golf balls by the dozen among the shingle and blackberry-bushes, to the huge satisfaction of the lynx-eyed "caddies," who get

paid handsomely for lost balls when recovered.

Ah, yes! I am told that this plentiful and incessant rain has done immense good to our sea links, and the spirits of the gentlemen in the scarlet coats and astounding stockings are visibly rising every hour. They intend to do wonders on the refreshed turf, when the puddles have dried up—puddles that are at present a great delight to the children going across the common to the sea-shore with their toy-boats. They can have miniature yacht races all to themselves now that, according to the Psalmist, "the pools are filled with water."

I kept wondering for three dull, depressing, thundery days, when the rain came down with an incessant patter on the verandah of the "Bungalow Yacht," and there was no sign of a human being anywhere, what had become of the enthusiastic golfers. Into whose attentive ears were they pouring the "golf shop" which they could not put into practice? How the incarcerated families must have cursed the words "bunker," and "foursome," and "bogey?" I suppose they played golf in the lodging-house drawing-room with the poker, shovel, and fire-irons.

But, on the whole, I do not think that golf shop is quite as bad as fishing shop, which is the very worst shop in existence. Cricket shop is excusable—nay, it is delightful; but the fisherman who fights his finny battles o'er again on a wet day is, not to put too fine a point on it, a bit of a nuisance. I was once shut up for three stormy days at a lake inn at Glendalough, in Ireland, and I think I heard more about trout, their wiles and devices, than I ever heard before or ever want to hear again; and I was one of a fishing family, and heard about jack, barbel, and bream from infancy. I can recall very vividly a dreadful wet week at Scilly, when the conversation and the dinner table reeked of "pollack" to such an extent that some of us, who did not care if we ever looked a "pollack" in the face again, were nearly maddened until release came with the exhilarating sunshine, and whilst the pollack fishers were tossing on the sea and catching, or missing, or nearly catching, or almost missing, the most uninteresting and tasteless of fish, we were all in hammocks amongst the flowers and the songbirds and the pleasant faces we found at Holy Vale.

One of those memorable few days when our island was flooded, and the mushrooms were growing, and the blackberries were rotting on the bushes, and the sea-mist clasped us round as in a winding-sheet, I recalled another experience up in the Swiss mountains some years ago. Imprisonment on board a "Bungalow Yacht" is bad enough, but it is not quite so bad as incarceration at the "Eggischhorn Hotel" during a mountain mistral of mist. That is the kind of mist from which you cannot escape. You are perched up on a ledge of rock, and like the starling, you cannot get out.

Put your nose outside the door and you are nearly blinded with the mountain fog, which insinuates itself into all the damp, cold corridors of the hotel, and suggests rheumatism at every turn. At such places there is always a preponderance of storm-bound and intensely wretched headmasters, and schoolmasters, and swell scientists, and physicians, and lawyers—yes, and thank goodness for it, actors and actresses—for on this occasion one of the best comedy actresses of our day saved the cosmopolitan inhabitants of the "Eggischhorn Hotel" from depression,

despair and suicide. The schoolmasters, eternally parading those foggy corridors, could not go on discussing Greek roots, the Digamma, or mistakes in examination papers for evermore; the scientists were weary of fighting their battles over again, or playing draughts or chess before a mist-smeared Alpine window; the physicians were disconsolately shuddering over the fire and making up fancy prescriptions in their note-books just to while away the time. Outside, mist in gusts, squalls, hisses; a sudden gleam of blue, and then a second after a gust of mist, the sight of a larch for a second, and then a whirling steam of mist, as if we were on a railway station. Nothing to break the monotony and melancholy but the eternal sound of goat-bells, and sheep-bells, and ox-bells, hanging round the necks of animals that we could not see, but which would have blundered against us and toppled us over the precipice if we had dared to go round the corner of the mountain path in the impenetrable fog. It was then that merry Mrs. B., I beg her pardon, "Lady B," now the most genuine artist of our time on or off the stage, took us all

in hand, and the most extraordinary conversion and transformation took place. In less than half-an-hour all the stiff schoolmasters and the learned professors and the scientists and the doctors of divinity were sitting in a circle round Mrs. B., being taught by her how to play "dumb crambo," and turning themselves into orchestras, each playing an imaginary instrument at the word of command of our amusing president. Conceive the fun of it!

The head master of a great public school coming in at the door on all-fours to point a period in dumb crambo; a fashionable, grave, Harley Street physician tootling on an imaginary flute; a man of science, whose books have a world-wide reputation, acting the corner-man at an amateur Christy minstrel entertainment, with Mrs. B. alternating between Brudder Bones and the solemn man who gives out the names of the sentimental songs in the centre of the half-circle. In a few hours the cold, damp, and dispiriting "Eggischhorn Hotel" echoed with the heartiest of laughter, and we scandalised the hotel proprietor by burning his oil lamps until a very late hour, after the merriest of dinners. And

then, of course, the mist cleared away, and down we went, running and leaping, and in danger of spraining our ankles as we descended to the smiling valley.

In just the same fashion the sea mist disappears from the lower deck of the "Bungalow Yacht." Out came the sparkle and the blue again ; the Isle of Wight and Bembridge hove in sight over there ; the sunny common was dotted over to our delight with scarlet-coated golf-players. Shouting and merriment were heard in abundance on the island, and, of course, it was the very day after the rain to go to Southsea Regatta. If Southsea has one peculiarity it has that of smartness, There is an air of discipline and neatness about Southsea.

The girls are all neat, trim, and taut. They are, half of them, the daughters or relations of retired army and navy men, and they would not have a ribbon or a buckle out of place for the world. All the girls at Southsea appear to be under the eye of the commanding officer, and always "at attention." It is the headquarters of primness and pipeclay. Not that Southsea, with all its discipline and

military and naval precision, is essentially aristocratic. Quite the contrary. Southsea also has its common, with common rights and people's privileges, of which Southsea is commendably jealous. You can gallop if you like over Southsea common just as we used to do as boys on Blackheath, and you can get as fine a blow on the sea-front as anyone would desire, for does not Southsea boast a sea-wall, embankment, and promenade all round and about the old castle, a sea-front and esplanade nearly as fine as that at Eastbourne, a sea-wall that might, with a little tact and enterprise, be continued the whole length of the seaside to Hayling Island?

There is only one brief interval of War Office land at Eastney Barracks and fortifications that would prevent the continuation of this sea-wall from the Clarence Pier, Southsea, to North Hayling, for surely more formidable strips of sea have been bridged over than the one that separates Hayling from Eastney.

Yes, I will try a new way to get to Southsea this time. That illuminated pier every night has only seemed a stone's throw from the "Bungalow,"

and still it has been necessary to go by road, a long way round, or rail, with two changes, before arriving at the delightful Southsea embankment or sea-wall.

So this time I will go on foot across the island, among the golfers and the blackberries which grow in profusion on our island. If you pause for the gathering of a handful, you must be on your guard lest your head is taken off with a lifting stroke, for the links don't end until close at the edge of the water by Hayling Ferry.

It is a romantic spot, this Hayling Ferry, and always reminds me of Armadale and the Norfolk Broads. It is only a very few hundred yards across from Hayling to Eastney, and yet the work of uniting has never yet been accomplished by bridge or American cargo boat. On the Hayling side is a little cottage and a little primitive inn, where the sailors going into the harbour congregate and drink good ale. On the Eastney side is another little cottage, surrounded with the "harvest of the sea," bits of anchors, hoops of barrels, old casks, wood, wreckage, enough old iron to stock a store, all cast up by the sea, and seemingly

stacked here for years and years. I am told that this same Hayling Ferry has been in the same family for a generation, and on it goes, backwards and forwards, a long pull here, a strong pull there, with youth on one side of the ferry and old age on the other, just as it has done these hundreds of years. It is a bleak, wild, but not unfascinating spot. I have seen it in all weathers and all seasons, in mid-winter and in mid-summer; and I like to sit down with "Jack" on the ale-house bench, as the wind whistles about our ears, and the peewits cry, and the sand-martins chase after the flies, and wonder whether the uniting of Hayling to the mainland will ever take place. But the exhilarating walk is not nearly finished. I have left the blackberry bushes and sandhills, and sea-daisies behind me, and now I am in the midst of targets and forts, and cannons and red flags, and sentry-boxes, and all the grim detail of the most modern of fortifications. But a short detour takes me to the very end of the South-sea embankment, and then my course is straight, briny, and breezy, right away to the Clarence Pier, where all day long, with never-ending interest,

they watch the steamers going to and returning from the Isle of Wight; they delight in the white-winged yachts that skim in and out of Portsmouth Harbour; they talk, and smoke, and eat chocolate, and flirt; they invest innumerable pence on the automatic boxes, getting their fortunes told a dozen times a day by their eyes, their colour, the shape of their noses, their nails, filling their seaside pockets with automatic telegrams, and love-letters, and fancy portraits of the adored one —"a penny in the slot."

But there is something more to be seen on the Clarence Pier, afternoon and evening, than the harmless nonsense of the seaside. Here come popular artists from London to sing at first-class concerts, and here may be heard the magnificent string band of the Royal Marine Artillery. In fact, Southsea boasts two piers, one at the Eastney end, and one at the Portsmouth end, and both piers are devoted to good music and automatic machines. Between the piers is a kind of mutual Campo Santo, facing the sea, where they erect monuments, tombstones, and cenotaphs to distinguished men beloved of Southsea and

its immediate district. It is a strange fancy to mix up boats and bathing-machines, restaurants and lollypops, with seaside tombstones and granite memorials; but I do not think it is an inappropriate place for such humble and affectionate memorials of good men and great deeds of the deep.

Municipally considered, I don't suppose that there are two smarter seacoast places in the south than Southsea and Portsmouth. Everything for the public service, such as cabs and lighting and good roads and order, is admirably managed at both places; but I very much doubt if "old salts" would recognise the Portsmouth of Charles Dickens and Captain Marryat, the Portsmouth of "Peter Simple" and "Mr. Midshipman Easy," the Portsmouth of the Hard and the Dock Gates, in the new, smart, red-bricked Portsmouth, with its magnificent barracks, park, and recreation grounds, its imposing town hall—one of the finest in the kingdom—in the Portsmouth up-to-date, which only requires a new railway station to make it perfect. Portsmouth, like many another place, must live up to its popularity, and it is quite certain that the Town Station

cannot accommodate the enormous traffic brought into Portsmouth and Southsea by the two enterprising railway companies. Portsmouth must do what Brighton has done, and a new station seems imperative.

But they tell me that smart Southsea is tempting away, with her splendid sea-front, her magnificent hotels, her well-watered roads, her breezy common, her excellent shops, and her interminable pleasure houses and villas, all that one loves of Portsmouth. No one could fail to be attracted by Southsea, and its incessant gaiety, but be the Portsmouth High Street never so deserted, and the trade gone up Southsea way, I shall ever make my pilgrimage to the old "George Inn," where, under the old archway, standing in the low windows, and on the broad pavement outside, I see my Captain Marryat heroes and hear the boyish laughter of the middies on shore. In good old Portsmouth I am never "Japhet in Search of a Father," but "Jacob Faithful."

Round about the Islands.

VERY vividly I remember that it was a gorgeous Saturday morning, at the close of a memorable English May. We were in holiday mood. By we I mean Brownie, Nipper, and I. We were all stretched out lazily on the soft grass of the deck of our Bungalow yacht. The Isle of Wight was over the way, across the blue, the fresh, the ever free, the dancing, glittering, prancing, tantalising sea. Behind us were acres of apple blossoms, countless fields of luxurious crimson clover, old-world farms, and old-world churches with ancestral yews embracing the tombstones, for all of which the ancient island of Hayling is justly celebrated.

But idling, dreaming, drowsing, as we were, we were not contented with the divine peace and rest of Hayling. Not to be at peace on board the bungalow yacht surely argues a frivolous or discontented mind. For the

bungalow yacht is moored for ever within half a dozen yards of the sea. It consists of a main saloon that never wobbles, several cabins in convenient corners, a conservatory full of deliciously-scented flowers, and outside, our delightful deck of soft, new-mown turf, unadorned, save by a solitary flagstaff, which will display the Union Jack of Old England by-and-bye, when we have time to hoist it to the tune of a patriotic song.

We ought all of us to be supremely happy on board the bungalow yacht, but on this occasion human nature, as usual, got the better of us. Brownie was able from her own particular cabin to pop out, in the most weird and fantastic garments, at all hours of the day and night, and race about the grass deck, her hair flying at the bidding of the winds of Heaven; whereas in London it is coiffed, caressed, waved, banded, as neat as a new pin, and the envy of every fashionable audience of smart women in our well-dressed metropolis. Nipper certainly ought to have been contented, for she bounds about the green and grassy deck all day long after a red india-rubber ball, which she is never weary of fetching.

though at times I am intensely weary of throwing it.

And I ought to have been as happy as a king, or as merry as a grig, on the little lawn at Hayling-by-the-Sea, for I was away from work, away from worry, with no telegraph boys knocking at the door, no persistent letters from male and female dramatists, asking me to read, digest, and get their plays accepted, because "my good nature is proverbial." "Bother that good nature," so Brownie says; "it has been the ruin of you!" If I had only been born a solicitor or a barrister, I should be entitled to charge and receive 6s. 8d. for every letter I wrote, and at least five guineas for every opinion I gave. But my sum total for writing letters to perfect strangers, and for reading plays, sketches, novels, articles, poems, and balderdash, from those whom I have never even set eyes on, is that inconvenient and unprofitable coin commonly known as "Nix."

Yes, I, of all others, should have been contented that glorious May morning, drinking in the fresh air, sucking in the salt sea breezes, rejoicing in the heavenly rest and solitude, for the deck-lawn of the bungalow yacht gave

me much exercise and amusement. For here I play cricket with the handy boy who comes from the village, and, being lord and master, I take the usual privilege of being "in" as often as possible. Here I hit to the boundary—it certainly is not very far off—and do, in the matter of cuts, drives, and swipes, what I ought to have done at Lord's and the Oval in days never to be recovered. Here on this deck-lawn, with sticks stuck up at convenient angles, I practise "putting." From here, if I care to be a spendthrift, I can drive a golf-ball into the sea half-way to the Isle of Wight; and here I keep up, as a veteran, the rudiments of lawn tennis which I acquired and practised as a youngster.

But it was Saturday, and I was restless. I always am restless on the last day of the week. I never can work comfortably on a Saturday. Few men, I think, grind harder all the year round, week in, week out, than I do. But work on Saturday gives me a sort of shock. Possibly I am remotely descended from the most ancient of all the races, but Saturday work gives me the horrors. I am bound to see plays, and scores of them, on Saturdays, but I

religiously refuse to write about them until Sunday. In my strictly orderly and domestic capacity, I am bound, of course, to "clear up my desk," and alas! to write cheques on a Saturday, but, except under pressure, I cannot settle down to dogged and deliberate work on the sixth day. And so it was that this holiday mood stole over me, even though I was lying full length on my back, looking into the cloudless sky, listening to the restless waves on the beach, and wanting but the peace with which I was not content.

I rather think that Brownie was of the same mind, but she is very cautious, and never—well, scarcely ever—gives herself away. I ascertained, by an artful, innocent, and secretive process, of which I flatter myself I am a master, that Brownie did not know so much of the district "round about the islands" as was good for her education. For instance, she had been to Portsmouth, but had never been on board Nelson's *Victory*. She had never been instructed properly in the haunts of "Peter Simple," or of "Mr. Midshipman Easy." I doubt if she ever lunched at the "George," or paid a visit to the jewel stores of the famous Messrs.

Emanuel, on the Hard. On this point I must own I was discreetly silent, for Brownie has a fascinating way with her when jewels pass through her approving fingers. Southsea and its beach was a name to her, and nothing more, and the Isle of Wight was a vague mystery.

She was born before the days of allegories. I doubt if she had ever heard of Parson Adams, who wrote "The Shadow of the Cross," "The Distant Hills," "The King's Messenger," and other books of my childhood, which excited my weak but imaginative brain when I was a surpliced choir boy, and made me think dimly that I had a vocation for the priesthood. I am sure that Brownie did not know that the Rev. William Adams lies at rest under the "shadow of a cross," in the lovely old churchyard at Bonchurch, the sweetest and most silent little God's acre in the kingdom; and to her Shanklin, Ventnor, the Landslip, and the Undercliff were unexplored regions. So, as the day had such a charm in it, as the sun shone brilliantly, as the flowers were all in full bloom, as the sea sparkled and was smooth, I determined to enjoy a Saturday outing, and

to see how much pleasure we could get out of the holiday hours between mid-day and midnight.

My plan and proposal nearly broke down owing to Nipper. There she lay on the grass between us, with a new collar on her sleek neck, to which was attached a bright yellow Californian bow, for Nipper is as proud of her bows as any "dog at a fair," which professional Toby she often imitates, and resembles. There she lay stretched between us, this fascinating little animal, with her beautiful brown eyes turned upon us both, and apparently understanding every word of our conversation. The question soon reduced itself to this: "Could we or could we not take the Nipper?" I call it a question, but it was nothing of the kind, for Brownie took the bull by the horns, or, rather, the dog by the collar, and declared, absolutely and firmly, that she would not budge one inch without Nipper.

It was not from any dislike to our faithful companion, believe me; but so many of my holidays have been ruined by the companionship of dogs, that I trembled for the result of our anticipated expedition. Ticket-collectors on

railways, as a rule, loathe them, captains on boats scorn them; you cannot enter a castle, view a ruin, stroll over a park, or even enter a churchyard with a dog at your heels. Custodians at large, and of every degree, are dead against dogs. How often, when I have approached one of the loveliest spots on earth, I have been paralysed with the announcement, "No Dogs Admitted"!

This always means no pleasure for me. What harm can a dog do in ruins or a churchyard? Would the remains of a Tintern Abbey, Fountains Abbey, Bolton Abbey, Melrose Abbey fall and crumble to the dust because an innocent little dog careered about the antiquated sanctuary? I cannot tell; but all I know is that the best holidays presented to us are often ruined by the presence of a dog. Guards shy at them, porters badger them, coffee-room waiters despise them, until the passages are barred to a paying guest at the mere sight of a poor litttle dumb beastie. In fact, save to his master or mistress, a dog is an outcast. This being the case, I made a weak protest, and argued gently with Brownie.

I might just as well have discussed the

matter with the sea! Without Nipper she refused to stir beyond the limited boundary of the bungalow yacht. I might be disturbed, discomforted, perturbed; I might have scenes innumerable with guards, porters, station-masters, coffee-room waiters, hotel proprietors, luggage porters, flymen, or what not; but Nipper was to be a *sine quâ non* on our Saturday jaunt. Nobody would, could, or should start out without Nipper was our closure; so it was a case of Nipper or no trip at all Accordingly we started off, Nipper and I, over the fields to the Hayling Island railway station. Brownie, got up in a green hat with Hamlet feathers, followed safely in the cosy corner of the hotel omnibus. Of course, we met at a most inconvenient moment, and Nipper, who had been gradually subjugated to obedience by a course of strict training by myself, heard the mellifluous sounds of Brownie's voice from the recesses of the 'bus, and dashed off, helter-skelter, unled and unmuzzled, defying the laws of the county of Southampton. Where Nipper led I was bound to follow, threatened by carts, bellowed at by bicycle bells, in the dust, out of the dust, my new green crocodile boots

ruined for the day, until I arrived panting, torn, and a wreck, at Hayling Island Station.

Then came a pleasant pause as far as Havant, by the doll's railway, that passes through a district of buttercup fields and mud-banks. At Havant Station I wanted to buy all the papers I could tuck under my arm, for your journalist, I fully believe, buys more papers every day than any other man living. I wanted to be weighed, to see if I were one fraction over or under thirteen stone.

But all these things were frustrated by Nipper, in whose honour a Hayling collar and an extra London collar had been manufactured in Havant, and it became my task to make a bolt from Havant Station to the saddler's, in order that Nipper might be dressed for her holiday. The consequence was that the collar was not forthcoming, and all the tickets—human tickets, dog tickets, and the like—were all wrong, and never quite recovered themselves.

And what a journey it was, all in the space of a few hours! Portsmouth and Southsea, Captain Marryat land, and Nelson's *Victory* were all digested before mid-day. Then came the sea

journey to Ryde; Brownie, who was to have been my companion for the day, dozing under the shelter of an awning on deck, and Nipper fast asleep on Brownie's lap. Not one word of conversation from Portsmouth to Ryde; so I devoted myself to inwardly cursing a ghastly man-woman, with short-cropped hair, and short skirts, huge ungainly boots, a brown skin, obtrusive spectacles, and an irritating manly strut, who ought, for the honour of womanhood, to have been pitched into the sea for her libel on a charming sex. We arrive at Ryde. It is the most delicious month of the year, but it is not yet the season for the seaside. The famous pier is empty. They will wait until August, when the heat is unbearable, to patrol this ghastly, unsheltered pier, with yachting caps, white waistcoats, white gowns, white boots, impudent leers, and other men-women abominations. Ryde pier was deserted, save for a company of Isle of Wight Volunteers, whom we took in safety to Sandown, where they detrained, to our mutual satisfaction.

At last I am at dear old Shanklin, again the Shanklin of many memories. Shall it be Daish's for luncheon, or

Hollier's, both with lovely gardens; or shall I revisit the scenes of my youth at Hinton's Spa Hotel, which I knew before any pier was built, or any house or villa erected under the cliff on the sea-front?

Poor old Archibald Hinton! That cheery and delightful Bohemian is gone, and his wife has gone also; both are resting side by side in Shanklin churchyard, and Hinton's Hotel (Limited) exists only in name. Smart, pretty, with its charming winter garden, hall, and smoking-room, and with the chalybeate waters of the Shanklin Chine turned into the very hall of the hotel. The only living connection to me with the Shanklin of the present and the Shanklin of the past is the cheery, clever little Dr. Dabbs, the dramatist doctor, and reputed as the cleverest man on the island. He was the medical attendant of the late Lord Tennyson; he is well acquainted with plays and players; he is the greatest comforter of the sick; and I know that when my time comes I should like to see Dr. Dabbs at my bedside, for if I were in pain he would soothe it away, and if I looked like getting well again we would try to collaborate on a drama of the future!

Talk about the Corniche Road on the Riviera, or the steel engraved pictures in Rogers' "Italy"—was anything ever better seen than the peeps of distant Shanklin, the Landslip, and the approach to Bonchurch, on the road between Shanklin and Ventnor? But take the drive in late May or early June, when the blossoms are at their best, and before the holiday traffic and char-à-banc have powdered the sweet-smelling hedges with white dust. We pass house after house, farm after farm, smothered in roses, where we should like to live for the rest of our days. In fact, the Isle of Wight in rose-time is a foretaste of Paradise. Of course, we stop at Bonchurch, and wander down the hill to the old churchyard, and see the graves of Adams and Carlyle's friend, Sterling, and hear that this one God's acre is closed for ever now, and the church is kept up merely as a venerable ruin. But what a garden of sleep it is! How I should like to be buried under blossoming trees, exquisite rose-bushes, and, above all, within sound of the ever-moving sea!

And now we find ourselves in the sunny garden of the Royal Hotel, Ventnor. A charming host comes out

to greet us — a genial foreigner, who understands thoroughly the art of making his guests at home, and does not number us as parcels, or label us as "Mr. and Mrs. Chance." The day is deliciously beautiful, and here, on this entrancing lawn, we could remain for hours, if it were not for the warning accents, so well expressed in Browning's "In the Gondola": "Row home! must we row home?" What a poem of life is expressed in those words! It is the inevitable of every holiday! So back we go by train, under the glorious downs of the Isle of Wight, through Shanklin and Sandown, and Apple Durcombe, to Ryde; back across the Solent, back among the old hulls and warrior ships of Portsmouth, back to dear little Havant, where, at the delightful Bear Hotel, we find a dinner prepared for us better than we should find at the best restaurants in London. It is Saturday, the one holiday of Havant. The miniature town is full of villagers doing their marketing. Bands are heard, and Cheap Jacks chatter at street corners.

The daylight gradually dies. The beautiful sun sets. Once more we

drive out of the streets of primitive little Havant, once more we cross the bridge dividing mainland from island, once more we pass through the leafy lanes, all perfumed with wild honeysuckles and sweet-scented blossoms; and so, in the May moonlight, we arrive once more on our grass-green deck of the bungalow yacht, dead tired, but, oh! so happy and thankful for such a bright, beautiful, and blessed day—Brownie, Nipper, and I!

A Playground by the Sea.

THE epigrammatic visitor might briefly describe Great Yarmouth as a Rotterdam without its costumes combined with a Scheveningen minus its dulness. There is something irresistibly Dutch about this popular watering-place on the East coast. It is Dutch in its streets, Dutch in its sands, Dutch in its inland scenery. Where else but here and in Holland can you find dykes, broads, canals, and brackish lakes; where else such a collection of sedges, reeds, waterfowl, and windmills as may be discovered by the curious within an easy journey of this playground by the sea? Of the Norfolk and Suffolk broads I shall have something to ask by-and-bye; I shall have to ask Thames yachting men and fishermen, naturalists, and men of science why they are not more often found learning how to steer and sail on the Yare or on the

Waveney, with topsails gleaming along the surface of Braydon Water, or making their way by river, canal, and artificial cutting to Oulton Broad; I shall have to question these campers-out by our favourite Thames river why they know so little of the trip from Yarmouth to Wrexham, or fail to make themselves acquainted with the picturesque scenery of our English Holland. For the present, however, my purpose is to deal alone with Yarmouth and Yarmouth proper with the headquarters of Bloater Land, with the childhood's home of David Copperfield, and the scene of the loves of Steerforth and Little Emily, with the birthplace of Peggotty and Ham, and the wailing spot of Mrs. Gummidge, with the city of the old "rows," and the old-fashioned market-place, which has somehow lost all its salt, fisherlike, and briny air, and been turned—at least in summer time—into one of the most marvellous playgrounds of sand that I have ever found round and about these islands of ours. I have mentioned Rotterdam and Scheveningen not without reason. The first impression of a place is everything;

it is instantaneously acquired, but it never leaves one. Directly I left the railway station at Yarmouth and drove across the bridge on to the quay, where else could I be in the world but in Rotterdam? The banks of the canal, or river, planted with trees, the old Norfolk wherries at the quayside, with painted masts and hulls and fantastic pennons; the London steamer just arriving and in process of being moored to the quayside; the foreign-looking Town Hall facing this scene of arrival, departure, and merchandise; the gaiety, variety, and picturesqueness of the place—brought Holland and the Boompjes instantly back to the memory. But a seaside place is not characterised by its railway station, its quays, its market-places, or its churches. They may be all very varied, antiquated and interesting, but it is only fair to own that the ordinary run of seaside visitors decide for or against a popular watering-place by its sea front. A man will lose his temper who, going down to the sea, does not get a bed-room immediately facing the ocean. He may sit up half the night in the smoking-room, arise at cock

crow, and comfortably sleep in the chamber devoted to that purpose; but it is essential to his happiness that he shall have an outlook seaward. When the family is despatched to its allotted month of sand-digging and paddling half the enjoyment is cut off if the lodgings are in a street running at right angles with the waves instead of facing them. When I first saw the sea front of Yarmouth it was Scheveningen that was recalled. I had pictured the ordinary English watering-place, the tall houses, the monster hotels, the neat gardens and enclosures, the occasional shrubberies and greenery; I had never conceived a playground by the sea so absolutely arid, flat, unrelieved, and, I am bound to add, unpicturesque. A more magnificent stretch of sand the coast of England cannot produce, but art has not been called in to assist the deficiencies of nature. There is a place called Blankenberge in Belgium, nay, there is Ostend itself, that can boast nothing in the way of cliffs, but the monotonous flatness has been relieved by the architect and the builder. The eye is allowed to wander away

from an unbroken plain, a flat surface has been varied by the builder and the landscape gardener.

Yarmouth has no such æsthetic assistance. If her shore and beach are commonplace she has evidently made up her mind that her houses shall be ordinary too. There is no imposing mansion along the whole of the magnificent coast here. There is scarcely a garden or a green tree. The seaside promenade is flat, wide, and uniformly yellow. The seaside lodging-houses are dwarfed villas. Public buildings of a decidedly unromantic character, such as a military depot, a naval hospital, a sailors' home, a cemetery, a workhouse, and a small-pox hospital are permitted to stand out boldly to sea, and to occupy sites that would delight the speculative builder. There is no doubt a small, snug, and select West End of Yarmouth in the neighbourhood of the Victoria Hotel, where an attempt has been made to alter the monotony of the sandy promenade. The Assembly Rooms stand back in a garden plot, and the houses adjacent boast a frontage of lawn; but at Yarmouth the East End predominates.

The friends of the town are fond of freedom, and do not care to be smart. They must have oyster-stalls on the fashionable promenade; they must have public-houses exposed to the sea; they must have all the means at hand for refreshing and delighting the countless thousands who are poured upon the Yarmouth sands day after day and week after week by the enterprising railway company which is alive to the value of such a stretch of sand. Margate and Ramsgate put together, in the height of the season, could not produce so many children as are found every morning and afternoon on the Yarmouth sands. Not even in the old days, before the London, Chatham, and Dover Railway Company built their station and destroyed the proper meaning of Mr. Frith's picture, did Ramsgate contain one-half of the variety, business, and excitement that are to be found to-day at Yarmouth. To begin with it is a sand of unexceptional purity. There are sands elsewhere that are only half sands—sands with streaks of shingle in them, sands with morasses and wet places, with ugly fords to be got over as at Boulogne, sands where lakes spring up

at certain tides that wet the summer costumes and disturb the children. Not so at Yarmouth. The sands here are like the finest brown sugar—they are warm, and dry, and comfortable. The tiniest infant can turn them with a spade; they are never covered by the sea in summertime, and there are miles and miles of them, stretching to the right hand and to the left. What is the consequence? They are popular as no seaside playground is popular. They are seized upon as "pitches" by the itinerant vocalist and photographer, they are like a huge fair from morning until night. The boatmen summoning recruits for a sail out to sea in painted luggers; the bathing men and women continually drawing the machines up and down the soft sand; the fruit sellers and sweet vendors, the try-your-weight machines and electric batteries, the gipsies and fortune-tellers, the flower-girls and cake men, give Yarmouth sands a character all their own. Yarmouth, as at present constituted, is the veritable home of music-hall minstrelsy. Songs and choruses go on from morning till night. An enterprising firm of singers with a harmonium and indefatigable perseverance,

has rented from the Corporation a ring of ground in the centre of the beach, and here they give concerts, open-air *al fresco* concerts, almost all day, depending for remuneration on penny chairs and programmes. On one of the principal piers there is a twopenny concert under a wooden shed all the morning before lunch, and almost all the evening after dinner, where the fashion of Yarmouth repairs to gather the latest flowers from the music-hall bouquet. There is no pride about the visitors here. A roughly painted pier, an old sail to keep off the wind, and a wooden shanty to shield them from the sun is quite enough for them, and they seem delighted with the sentiment and humour of the modern ballad. There is another pier, where a more refined entertainment is given, and classical music is introduced at sunset, but it is not nearly so popular a concert as the one where the sentimental young ladies, over their books and knitting, join in the chorus to "Old Familiar Faces," or when the irresistible comic singer creates a *furore* with some intoxicating refrain. But even here the full skill of the music-hall minstrel is not exhausted, for the

crowds that have sung these songs all the morning on the sands or on the Britannia Pier will be found at night at the Aquarium vociferously applauding Mr. Jolly John Nash and Mr. Arthur Roberts before unlimited dancing winds up the pleasures of the day. This is the one, and possibly the only, watering-place that has no select or fashionable quarter. Margate boasts its Clifton-ville, and Ramsgate has her Granville or Marina, places where it is possible to get away from the cheerful and laughter-loving crowd. But at Yarmouth you are bound to do as Yarmouth does. You must in the morning thread your way amongst the thousands of children who are doing on the sands what children have done from time immemorial. You will find them making castles and moats and tunnels; you will see them making a sand arm-chair for mother and father, and burying their nursemaids and sisters in this comfortable grit; you will watch them contentedly filling their shoes, and eyes and hair with sand, and eating their sandy luncheons out of sandy news-papers. It is no exaggeration to say that children swarm on the Yarmouth sands as they swarm nowhere else in

England. The beach is perfectly safe; they can all paddle and dig and roll without the slightest danger. If aweary of watching these childlike amusements, you must go out for a two hours' sail, or be found on the sea in some shape or size of boat at some period of the day or other. This is *de rigueur.* A few days ago I was watching over the pier-head a party of excursionists tossed upon the waves and sadly sea-sick. Their condition was so heartrending that a friend called out in compassion to the leader of the party, "I say, old boy, aren't you coming in?" "No!" replied a melancholy and sea-sick voice. "Oh, no. We've got half an hour more!" This determination not to be done out of half an hour's abject misery struck me as heroic but none the less comical. From the fascinating sands of Yarmouth it is impossible to tear the great bulk of the visitors. There are excursions in the immediate neighbourhood to Cromer, to Lowestoft, to Southwold —all of which places I hope to visit— and up the river to Norwich; but to the sand and the piers the holiday-makers remain faithful. Here all day they dig, and bathe, and boat, and idle,

and sing; as night comes on they sing again, dance at the Assembly Rooms or Aquarium, and one and all eat oysters before they go to bed. This oyster-eating is an institution in Yarmouth. There are oyster stalls underneath the music platform on the pier, oyster stalls permanently attached to the most popular taverns on the sea-front, and as nightfall comes on perambulating oyster stalls make their appearance, a wide tray covering a costermonger's truck, and lighted by swinging lamps, affording rather a pretty effect along the spacious sea front and the fringe of these delightful sands.

But the full value of Yarmouth as a playground for the people has just been practically shown to me. A well-known firm of manufacturers at West Ham — one of the most crowded among East End districts— had arranged an excursion for the whole of their work-people, as they have been in the habit of doing for several years past. These imprisoned toilers, who have so little light and air at home, have been taken continually to Rosherville and the Crystal Palace and such like places, but this year it was arranged to

carry them all down to Yarmouth, nine-tenths of them never having seen the sea in their lives. The excursion appears to be arranged on the most liberal scale. Not only those actually employed at work, but their wives, their mothers, their fathers, and their babies were included in the invitation. By accident I saw the arrival of these six hundred of excursionists at the railway station, and followed them as they rushed joyously in a great army to the sea. In the train they were singing at the top of their voices; they sang in the streets as they were directed seaward; but the sight of those sands and the sea with its shipping fairly astounded them. They simply rolled about the sand with sheer delight as children do on a meadow. They had no spades to dig with, or buckets to fill, but they scraped out holes for themselves with their hands, and then flung themselves down, revelling in the fresh air and blue sky. After a pause they were on the move again, singing and shouting at the top of their voices, and clambering into the boats to go out to sea to feel what the waves were like and to get the breezes full

on their faces. Luckily the sea was calm, and they returned none the worse to the dinner and tea which had been provided for them at the Aquarium, within a stone's throw of the beach. But so long and wide are the Yarmouth sands that this important addition made no appreciable difference. Though all these excited enthusiasts were flung upon the hospitable shore, not a child was disturbed in its digging, and not a sand castle was knocked down.

Yarmouth, though unattractive at first in a purely picturesque sense, grows upon the visitor. He will not find here fashionable promenades or a very select society; people do not come here to dress, or to show their high-heeled boots; they come to enjoy the air and to get health, to brown their skins, and to bathe the baby. The air blows clean and soft, full from the German Ocean; there is health in every step taken from the Nelson Column to the North Battery. There are prettier bits of coast away by Gorleston and its quaint old pier, to which fashion is more inclined, but for honest simplicity, unconventionality, and general comfort

commend me to genial Yarmouth — the people's playground by the sea.

The Golden Isles.

I FLATTER myself that I am a good hand at discovering what a cricketer would call new "Holiday Pitches." I always know a good wicket when I see one. Shall I ever forget the day when I first looked out of a railway carriage at Cromer, and saw the little village, the lighthouse hill, the distant Overstrand and Sidestrand; and I said to myself, the nature-loving world ought to know something of Cromer. And to think how it has all come to pass. Years and years before golf was a popular pastime I surveyed the golf links at Cromer.

I used to play golf by myself on these very Cromer links, with a hooked stick and a sea pebble, just for fun. And this was scarcely ten years ago. Look at it now. Cromer, with a smart new hotel, and the village extending itself to Sheringham. The lighthouse hill, possessing the most popular links in the east of England. Overstrand, developed into a kind of Eastern Counties Bedford Park. Sidestrand, a haven of lodging-houses.

Mundesley, which when I saw it was the city of the dead, now a thriving seaside holiday ground; and all because in the dear days of long ago I looked out of a railway carriage at Cromer, got out one midsummer morning, a solitary passenger, and wrote what I felt about the place and its enchanting district.

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memories for me. I wanted the world to enjoy it as I did.

Please God some have done so these many summers past.

There is a little corner of the world that I discovered and prospected the other day. An exquisite little sunny village, a very few miles out of Toulon, situated in a lovely, sunhaunted bay, opposite the lovely Isles of Gold and the Isthmus of Gien, and other paradises unknown to the wild scamperer over the Riviera seaboard. What do they know of Nature, these fashionable Goths? They make a dead rush at Cannes, or Nice, or Monte Carlo, or Mentone, but they forget that exquisite sea-board between Toulon and St. Raphael. They have never heard of the *Presque Ile de Gien*, a verdant paradise; they have never soiled their aristocratic lips with such a word as *Carqueiranne.*

Why, then, is Carqueiranne, a few miles out of Toulon, a good place to prospect and encourage? I will tell you. With a little energy and capital it might be made the Richmond or Greenwich of Toulon. As matters stand, it is an easy walk, an easier drive from that interesting city; and if it were ever to be made popular, a tramway would connect it with the great French maritime port with the greatest ease. Already the artists and art lovers of Toulon are finding it out. The painters come here to put on canvas the Isles of Gold at sunset.

The cyclists call here on their way through the cork forests to St. Raphael.

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On Sundays, in the summer time, when it is stifling hot at Toulon or Hyères, the inhabitants come down in swarms to Carqueiranne to catch the ingredients for bouillabaisse from the rocks underneath the hotel, and then they retire under the cool, dark, pine trees to cook their spoil, to drink the white wine of the country, to sing Provencal songs, and to enjoy life and beauty to the full. It must have been at a villa within a dozen yards of this primitive village that George Sand made romances and Chopin made music. What a spot for poetry and song!

Alas, I have never seen my lovely fishing village when the summer is sweet and the residents in Provence take it by storm.

But I have seen it in the desolation of winter dress, with about three visitors at the hotel, and about

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half-a-dozen chance passengers. What a scene! Underneath the Italian terrace of the clean but rude hotel the blue Mediterranean waves dash over rocks and freshen the faces looking eagerly out to sea. In full front are the Islands of Gold, crowned everlastingly with a halo of sun, islands that you can reach in less than an hour in one of the painted skiffs idling on the warm beach. At the back of the house are sheltering woods, miles and miles of them. Villas, some pretentious, some of the humblest pattern, are dotted about this enchanting bay. But it is lonely, it is desolate, it is deserted.

Because it is not known. For my own part, I believe that there is a future for the fishing village of Carqueiranne.

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